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# STARLOG

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NUMBER 14

June

**SAVING NASA'S SKYLAB**

**PREVIEW: "CAPRICORN ONE"**

**THE ART OF VIRGIL FINLAY**

**INTERPLANETARY EXCURSIONS, INC.**

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# STARLOG

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NUMBER 14

THE MAGAZINE OF THE FUTURE

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**About the Cover:** P.S. Ellenshaw, the remarkable young director of Walt Disney Studios' Matte Department, is featured in this issue's installment of our Special Effects Series. The matte painting pictured on the cover is the "power-shaft sequence"—shown on its easel with the live-action insert of Ben Kenobi balanced precariously on the ledge. Mr. Ellenshaw created all of the highly specialized paintings used in *Star Wars*.

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# FROM THE BRIDGE

Because of the large volume of mail we receive, personal replies are impossible. Comments, questions, and suggestions of general interest are appreciated and may be selected for publication in future Communications. Write:

## STARLOG Communications

475 Park Avenue South  
8th Floor Suite  
New York, N.Y. 10016

### UFO'S IN 1890

... In STARLOG No. 12, James Oberg is quite correct in surmising a new wave of UFO's due to *Close Encounters*. A beautiful example of the "primed" UFO incident can be found in the ever-present Jules Verne. In 1887 appeared the first U.S. edition of his novel *Robur The Conqueror* (also known as *Clipper Of The Clouds*). The book was a best-seller. The first chapters describe in uncanny detail the classic UFO sighting wave: strange lights in the sky, travelling often at impossible velocities; strange sounds, voices and trumpeting; mysterious dark objects seen against the sun and moon; even a kidnapping and a UFO that paces a locomotive. What is *not* surprising is *immediately* following the book's appearance, sources of UFO incidents began to be reported in the newspapers. Virtually every incident that I have read, duplicates one in Verne's popular novel—down to the specific details in the flying machine's description! There is no question in my mind that the so-called "1890's UFO Flap" had its source exclusively in Verne's novel, combined with interest in the many experiments in heavier-than-air flight going on at the time.

Ron Miller  
P.O. Box 274  
Woodbridge, VA 22194



Photo: Warner Bros.

Right now, sitting on my desk are invitations from three science-fiction conventions, to be held this summer in Las Vegas, Atlanta and Milwaukee. The convention producers want a member of the STARLOG staff to appear, answer questions, present our slide show and mix with several thousand attendees. Since we are becoming celebrities in this field, I want to express an idea or two about the *wrong* reasons for attending conventions.

Science-fiction stories are often set in the future and almost always set in a reality that is radically different from our everyday world. There is a "removed-from-the-ordinary" quality which is part of the appeal of this field. But there is a built-in *danger*: many SF enthusiasts think of the fiction universe they enjoy as being an impossible dream.

In science fiction they find excitement, grand dangers, intelligent heroes, problems that can be analyzed and solved—in short, a kind of ideal world. In everyday life they find small-minded people, irritating little problems, boredom and frustration, battles that don't much matter whether won or lost—in short, a kind of confusing and uninspiring world.

Between these two, is there any doubt which world has more appeal? But one exists only as an artistic creation while the other is the *real* world in which we must live. Unfortunately, many idealistic young people lead a split-reality life in which the pleasures they experience from science fiction are more intense than those of real life. They long to escape the real world and live in a world of fantasy.

At a science-fiction convention these two worlds *seem* to come together. After all, walking around the hotel is definitely real life but it has the environmental and adventuresome qualities of fiction. A fan can dress in costume as his favorite hero or villain and experience something akin to the reality he longs for.

It is *not* a psychologically depraved longing. Far from it; there is every reason to want our lives to consist of all those qualities we enjoy in fiction. The mistake is in not learning how to bring those qualities into reality—into one's own life. It is *possible*, but it doesn't happen automatically, and you can't "pray it" into existence. It takes hard thinking and planning and positive actions.

We will be attending these three conventions and many more because we enjoy seeing new products, films, art, guest speakers and meeting other people who share our love of science fiction. It's a field of enormous adventure, thought-provoking ideas and rich imagination. The value of a convention is the same as seeing a good movie: its ability to excite you, motivate you, teach you, and make your life better.

Don't get me wrong, there are all sorts of fun reasons for designing and creating elaborate costumes and acting out your wildest dreams. It's like singing in the shower—only doing it in public. But we must guard against letting that kind of fun *substitute* for an exciting everyday existence.

As I said once before: you don't have to do battle with the *Death Star*, but you do need to fight for *something*—you need goals and values—you need courage—you need a happy spirit that finds the challenges of reaching your goals exhilarating.

Science fiction is like any other field of art; it can help you form your values and purposes and when the going gets rough, it can push you ahead and provide the inspiration you desperately need. But science fiction is not an alternative to the real happiness of real life.

Kerry O'Quinn/Publisher

### IDIOTIC INVASION

... In the wake of *Star Wars* and CE3K comes *Starship Invasions*. Naturally, it was meant to be SF but, due to SFX (or lack of them) and dialogue, it was rather funny. For instance, a two ton rubber UFO sits in the middle of New York City and nobody seems to care. An alien and two humans get out and steal some equipment. Again, nobody seems to really care. The movie's robot is a small man in a snowmobile suit, wearing mittens, of course.



Alas, we now come to the special effects. The first thing we see is water effects. It would seem that for this scene, the crew dropped a quarter into a puddle of water . . . and that is just what it looked like. Last but not least, we come to the "Death Star" of *Starship Invasions*. Here it is not a battle station but a simple little electric arc, that supposedly causes "suicidal and homicidal tendencies."

*Starship Invasions* has many a fault, but somehow they combine, masterfully, to form one of the funniest comedies of the year. Frankly, I was very surprised.

Matt Johnson  
330 E. Gloucester  
Saginaw, Michigan 48603

*A lot of moviegoers were surprised. The film was intended to be a drama.*



## ROCK ON

. . . I really enjoyed your article on SF and rock in STARLOG No. 10. I found the article entertaining and complete. In addition to the list of artists that have dabbled in SF, how about early Fleetwood Mac with their songs "Hypnotized" and "Bermuda Triangle." Thanks for the article and keep up the good work.

Pam Kirk  
W. Bloomfield, Mich. 48033

. . . I liked your article on SF in rock music. However, I must point out one terrible omission: Hawkwind, a major underground British group of the early seventies. Among their albums are *Space Ritual Live*, *Warrior At The Edge Of Time*, *In Search of Space* and *Quark Strangeness and Time*. They also have the distinction of being the only rock group who have had science fiction books written about them, *The Time Of The Hawklords* by Michael Moorcock and Michael Butterworth and *Queens Of Deliria* by Michael Butterworth.

Michele Rosenberg  
85-45 130 St.  
Kew Gardens, New York 11415

. . . As a long time rock fan and even longer SF fan, I was attracted to my first issue of STARLOG by Ed Naha's article "The Rock Connection." As an interesting aside, Jimi Hendrix's manager was once quoted as saying Hendrix was influenced in his music after first reading George Stewart's *Earth Abides*. The Rolling Stones also had the bug. For their 1975 tour, their stage was designed as a five pointed star.

Andy Semon  
Bridgeport, Connecticut.

# COMMUNICATIONS

## GREEN THUMB

. . . I was wondering if you could tell me the name of a movie that I saw a long time ago. It was about a man-eating plant. At the end it ate the guy who tried to kill it. All the way through the film, the man-eating plant said "Feed me . . . I'm hungry."

Jeri Flick  
Box 744  
International Falls, Mn. 56649

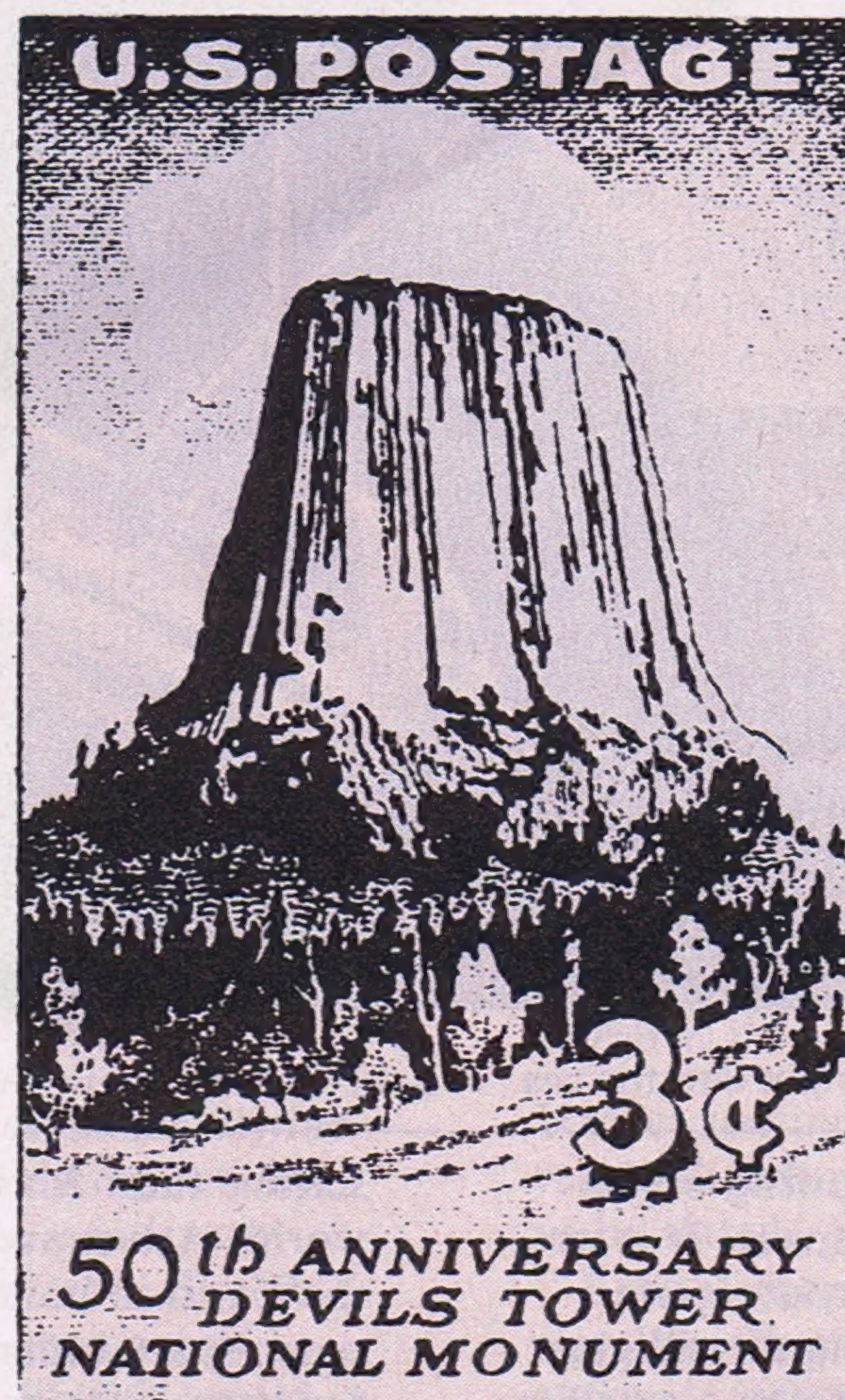
*The movie was the Roger Corman black comedy, The Little Shop Of Horrors, starring Jonathan Haze as the hapless delivery boy who accidentally cultivates a gigantic carnivore by feeding it human remains.*

## FUTURE STAMP?

. . . A philatelic impossibility? Not at all. To realize such a feat, pepper the U.S. Postmaster General (Washington D.C.) with requests. The choice of commemorative editions by the advisory committee is strictly influenced and decided by just such public interest. What better idea than a UFO U.S. postage stamp for STARLOGGERS? A collector's dream

Remy Chevalier  
25 Newtown Turnpike  
Weston, CT 06883

*Commemoratives have been issued for astronomical and space events but to our knowledge, never acknowledging the visionary contributions of the science fiction field. We need one person or one symbol that could graphically represent the entire field. Any budding designers out there with ideas?*



Actual U.S. commemorative stamp issued in 1956.

**ATTENTION SUBSCRIBERS:** Please do not send merchandise orders in with your subscription renewals. Since all subscription renewals and complaints are handled at P.O. Box 1999, Farmingdale, N.Y., 11737, your order may be delayed up to a week.

## MELTING MAN'S DAD

. . . I recently saw an advertisement for a movie called *The Melting Man* in which a man returns from outer space and contracts a space disease and literally begins to melt. I am familiar with David Ayres work as a creator of aliens. And I would like to know if he is the creator of the melting man.

Domenic John DiGiacomantonio  
10193 Cabery Road  
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

*Rick Baker is the creator of the melting man makeup (as pictured on the cover of STARLOG No. 11). For more info on this film's gooey goings-on, see the feature in this issue.*



Photos: © Columbia

## MAKEUP MISTAKE

. . . Congratulations on your March issue of STARLOG depicting extensive coverage on the lab technician in the article "Close Encounters Of The Third Kind." However, I wish to inform you of an error regarding responsibility for the creation of the alien configurations appearing on page 48. This head was actually sculpted by the talented hands of Mike McKracken and not by David Ayres, as the article states. However, neither that particular creation, nor the one being held by Mr. Ayres on page 42 were used in the actual film.

Both David and Mike were working out of The Burman's Studio under the supervision of Tom Burman during the time these heads were created. Seeing as how the first alien heads were rejected by the production company, Mr. Burman designed and sculpted an additional head and it was this creation that was actually used as the background characters for *Close Encounters*. Thank you for your time in setting the record straight.

Sandra Burman  
The Burman's Studio, Inc.  
Van Nuys, California

*Sorry for the mix-up. We hope all of Mr. Burman's fans enjoyed our article on his latest creation, The Manitou in STARLOG #13.*

## CLOSE ENCOUNTERS PROS AND CONS

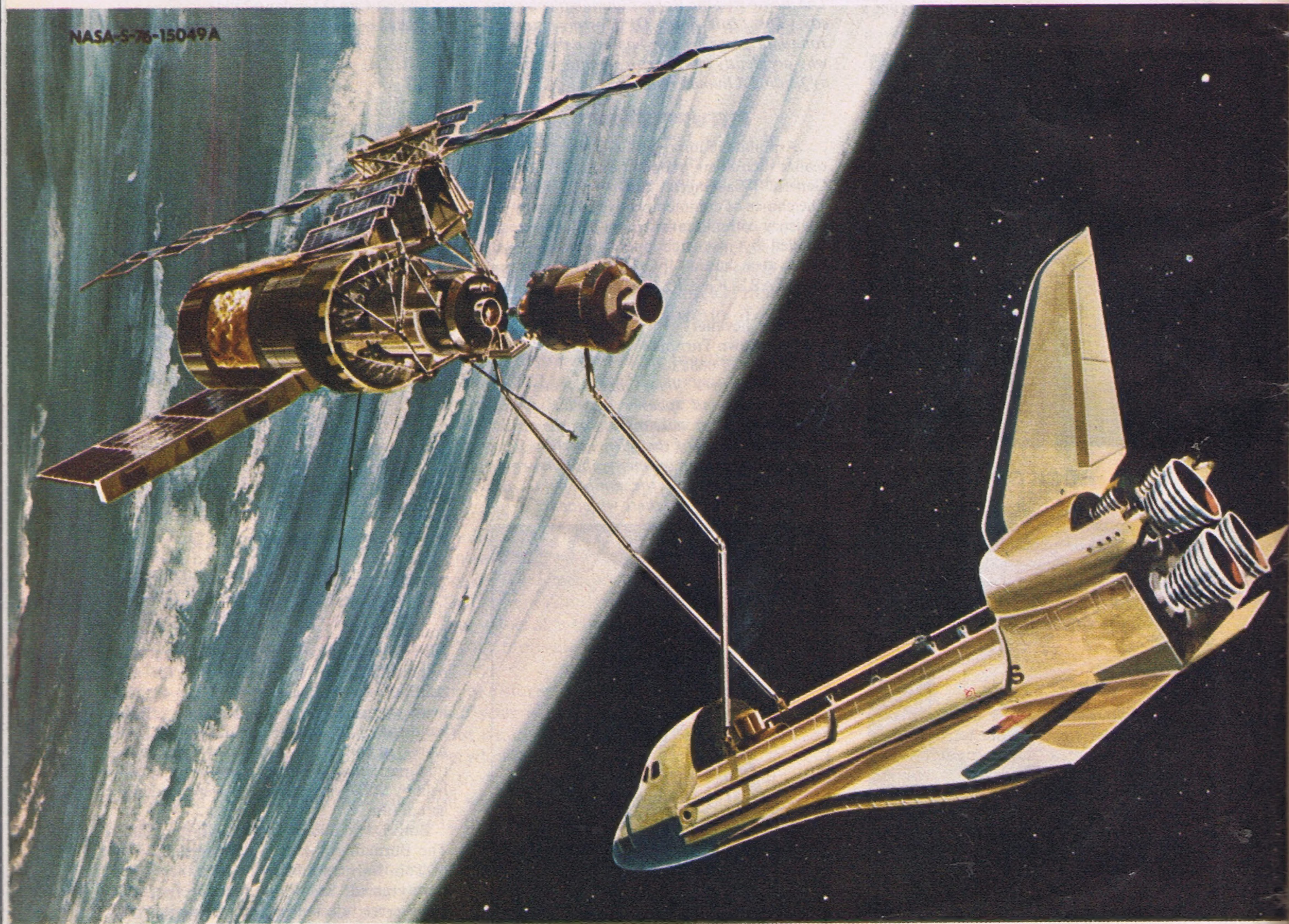
. . . I'm writing in regard to Mr. Zimmerman's "Lastword" editorial in STARLOG  
(Continued on page 57)



LATEST NEWS FROM THE WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION

# LOG ENTRIES

## NASA TO SALVAGE SKYLAB?



NASA Must decide whether to save Skylab or dump it into the sea. A Space Shuttle crew must attach a solid rocket in either case.

Occasionally, on a clear spring night, a glowing object can be seen moving through the vastness of space. It is not a meteor, for it can be spotted on a regular route quite often. It does not possess the familiar green and red lights of a passing aircraft. It is almost too bright to be a satellite (and many satellites can be seen on cloudless nights as well). Yet, it floats gracefully above the Earth, an echo of the past, the only one of its kind, the first space station ever put into orbit by the United States. Skylab.

Five years ago it roared into space, on its way to a trouble-plagued but ultimately triumphant mission. During the course of its first months in orbit, Skylab combined science-fictionesque thrills with equally daring feats of

science fact. An in-space repair job was witnessed above the world. Astronauts were filmed gleefully gamboling above the Earth in bursts of zero-gravity gymnastics. The realm of outer space became reality to many people who had thus far been quite unimpressed with the usual spacesuit-sitting-in-the-cramped-cockpit scenario.

Five years later, Skylab still prowls the skies, abandoned and empty. Its orbit is slowly dropping because of the miniscule amount of air drag 250 miles above the Earth. Skylab's orbital decay will accelerate in the coming years as solar activity increases. As the Sun's activity grows, the heat of the upper atmosphere will do likewise, raising its outer fringes and impeding the motion of the Skylab.



Depending on unpredictable solar variations, the prototype lab will fall to Earth and burn up sometime between 1979 and 1981.

NASA, however, may step in and save the day. The organization is currently studying plans to return to this "Flying Dutchman" of space and attach a rocket stage to the craft for propulsion. The hundred-ton satellite will either be deliberately plunged, kamikaze-like, into the empty south Indian Ocean, or will be boosted back up into a more stable orbit for ultimate repair and re-use. The idea of salvaging Skylab is an exciting prospect for NASA. Coupled with the upcoming Space Shuttle program, Skylab offers the opportunity for long duration space exploration; as well, it could become a valuable space resource which NASA's tight budget could otherwise ill afford.

Meanwhile, as NASA studies the alternatives, Skylab remains free game for any other space power which reaches it and claims it under the applicable rules of salvage. According to "space law," modeled after maritime statutes, any abandoned object in space becomes the property of whomever reaches it and exercises control over it. That could be the Americans, the Russians, the Europeans, a private corporation or anyone interested enough in pursuing the laboratory.

Should Skylab be left on its present course—unhampered by man—its predicted plunge to Earth could be visually spectacular but equally dangerous. The doomed re-entry could drop wreckage (such as Skylab's lead-lined film vaults or half-ton gyroscope wheels) across a wide swath of the Earth, causing extensive property damage and human casualties. Space law is clear on this point: should such a disaster occur, the U.S government would be strictly responsible for any resulting damage.

Space officials have held their collective breath in similar situations a few times in the past. Not long ago, sweat formed on many a brow when the giant S-2 rocket stage which had orbited Skylab fell earthward. As it slipped lower and lower, the varying density of the ionosphere sent it into unpredictable loops around the Earth. Its last orbit was plotted to cross London, Budapest, Istanbul and other major cities in Europe and the near East. Fortunately for everyone concerned, the missile plunged into the air above the North Atlantic and disintegrated, unobserved and harmless.

To avoid such anxiety on a constant basis, Soviet space stations are launched with maneuvering rockets installed. At the end of their planned lifetimes, the rockets are fired to plunge the craft into predesignated regions of the North Pacific. A similarly innocuous end awaits the giant Air Force "Big Bird" reconnaissance satellites. Skylab, however, has no such guidance system and is therefore doomed to a fiery end if no action is taken by the United States.

Current plans call for the fifth Space Shuttle flight, early in 1980, to rendezvous with the Skylab. Holding a position several hundred yards away from the derelict craft, the astronauts will guide a self-propelled robot stage up to the main docking port. Once fastened to the docking area, the rocket stage can be fired either forwards or backwards, depending on the planned fate of the satellite.

Financial realism may be a deciding factor in the Skylab 'scrap or save' decision, since the already existing satellite offers an economic opportunity to make use of already paid-for equipment. Even if the cost of the "save Skylab" program is not significantly different from the cost of constructing a new space lab, the re-use of Skylab would have the *appearance* of being a money-saving move and might be easier to win approval from Congress.

Skylab indeed offers NASA a number of very real benefits. Its solar power panels may have degraded somewhat over the years, but they will still be able to provide significant electrical power to the power-limited Space Shuttle. Since the rocket-plane Shuttle uses fuel cells for electricity, its mission length is limited by the size and

weight of oxygen/hydrogen tanks which actually give power to the fuel cells. A Shuttle "plugged into" the Skylab could stay in space three or four times as long as the current maximum shuttle trip envisioned . . . 30 days.

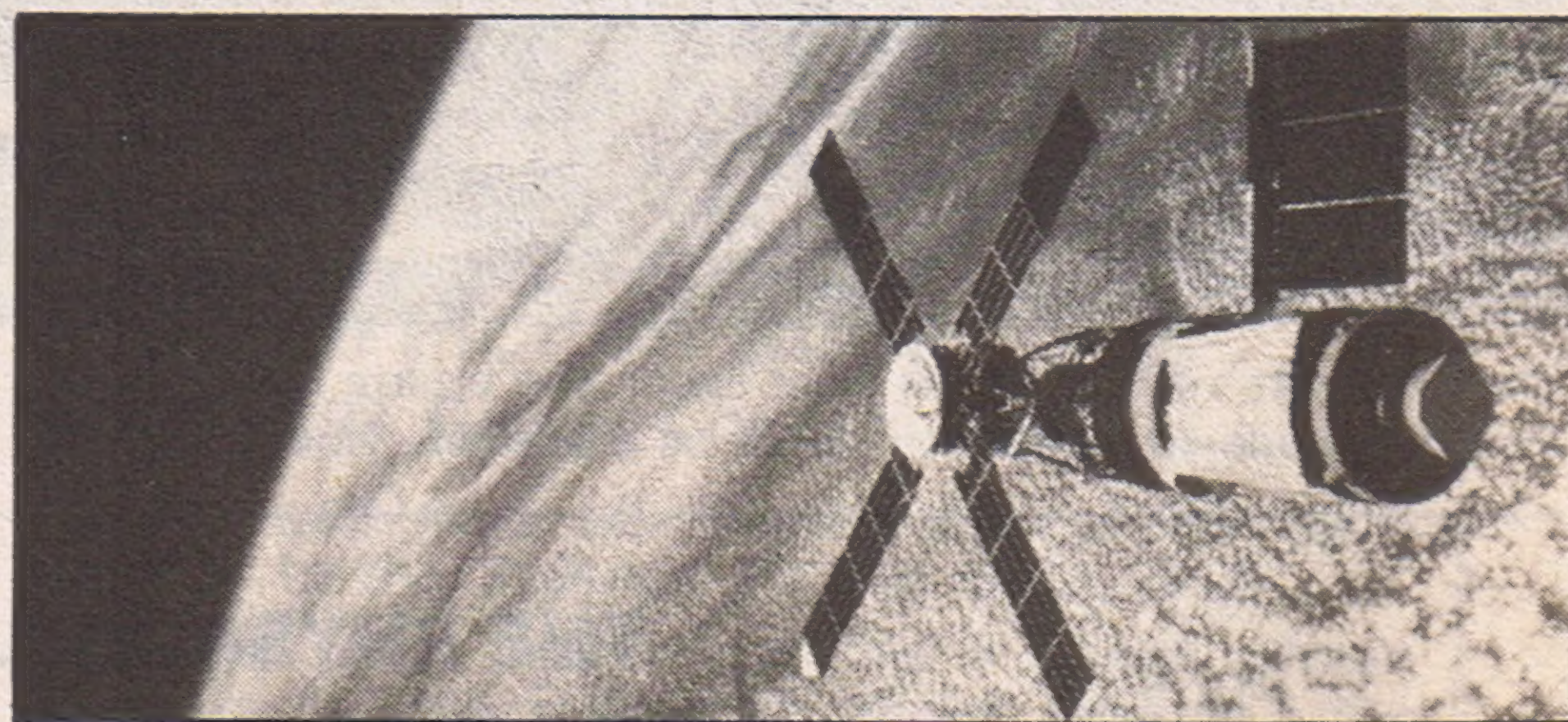
Skylab's pressure hull could also be filled again with a life supporting atmosphere, allowing up to seven eager astronauts with experimental equipment to be housed inside comfortably. Its present onboard instrumentation, ready for re-use, includes everything from telescopic cameras for solar and Earth resources observation to a powerful space industrialization processing furnace.

Skylab's last crew took into account the possibility of the satellite being manned once again, and they left behind a 'space time capsule.' Situated near the airlock hatch, it contains samples of food, film, drugs and other materials which, at a minimum, could be retrieved in order to study the effects of long-term spaceflight on different materials. The capsule could be retrieved on a space walk during an early Shuttle visit.

Despite its wealth of ready-made benefits, Skylab is in need of repair, although the repairs are fairly minor. Its solar panels were designed to work in sunlight and store electricity in batteries for nightshade portions of its orbit. These batteries are currently damaged. The stabilization system is in need of replacement, since the bearings of the gyroscope wheels have failed. The coolant loops which maintain a steady temperature within the lab will probably have to be replaced and possible meteorite holes in the craft's hull would require patching.

A revamped, restored Skylab could, by 1981 or 1982, add a new and important dimension to the Space Shuttle flights, providing the rocket planes with a chance of remaining in orbit for months on medical, biological and Earth-survey flights. Eventually, a portion of the Shuttle crew could even be left aboard Skylab to conduct experiments while the Shuttle itself returns to Earth. Skylab might even be the scene of a new joint Soviet-American space experiment, since it possesses two docking ports.

Should Skylab be used in conjunction with Shuttle flights, however, special Skylab-oriented Shuttle missions must be planned. At present, the most efficient launch azimuth for American spaceships is due east, giving an orbital inclination of about 28 degrees. To match the Skylab orbit of 50 degrees, the spaceships must be specially launched to the northeast, sacrificing a portion of their bonus velocity imparted by the Earth's eastward rotation.



Skylab in 1974—where will it be in 1980?

Hence, routine Space Shuttle flights will not be able to reach Skylab. Specifically designated missions would have to be slated.

Even if the mysterious SF connotations fall by the wayside, the mission to save Skylab still proves a thrilling concept. If NASA attempts the space salvage soon, the bright light in space will surely boast an added luster. It will circle the skies at dusk and dawn not just for a few years, but for decades to come. Once again, the point of light high in the heavens will house living, breathing, working human beings. Skylab's history is not over. The glory of five years ago may have only been a prelude to the productive future of America's first space station.

—James Oberg/Space Science Advisor



## SCIENCE CATCHES UP

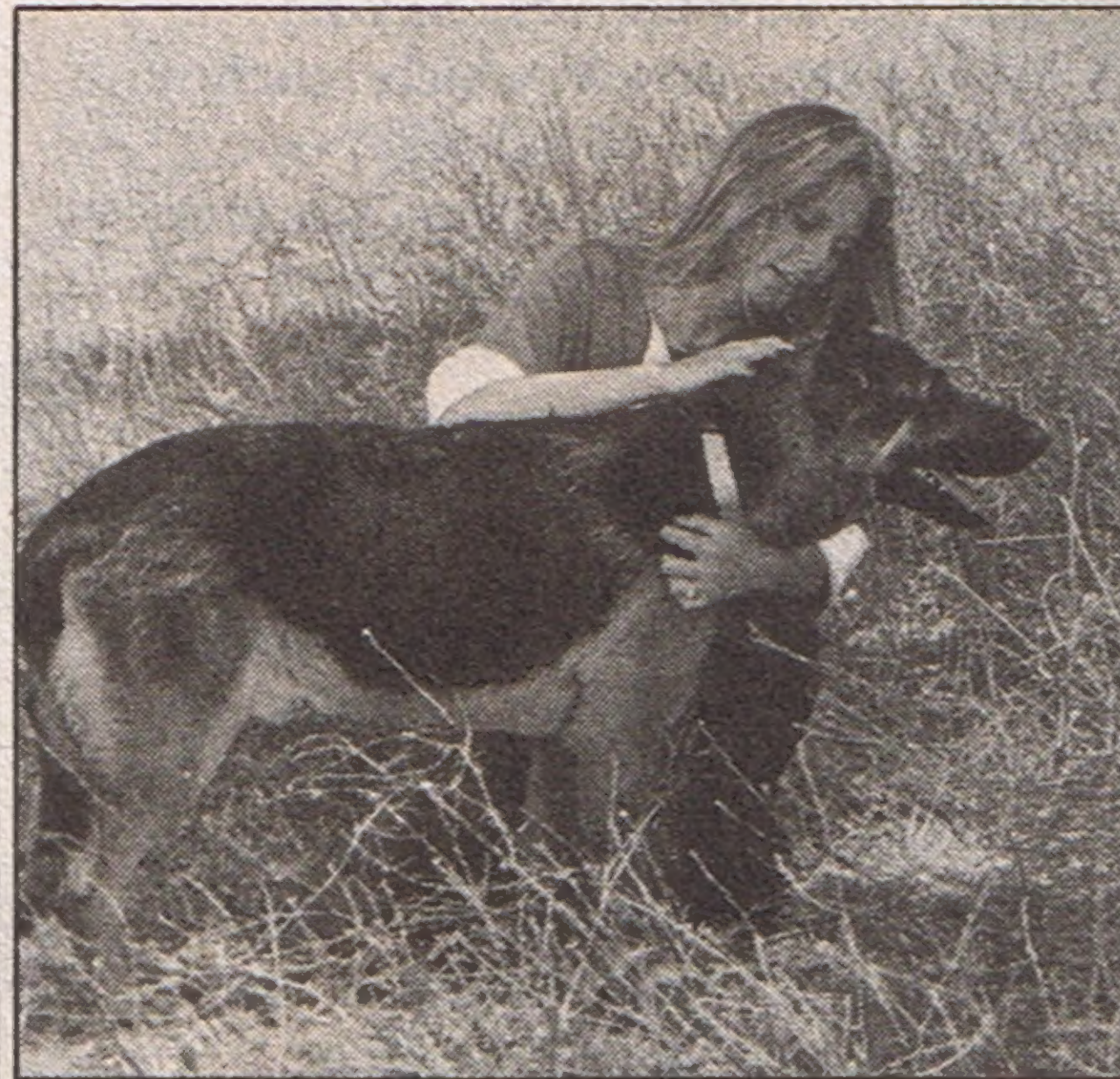
In 1959, Daniel Keyes wrote a moving story called *Flowers For Algernon* about a retarded man who becomes intelligent following an operation on his brain. The story won a Hugo for best novelette at the 1960 World Science Fiction Convention. It was adapted as a television drama, expanded to novel length, and made into the movie *Charly*, which won Cliff Robertson the best-actor Oscar. Now, an Ohio State University psychologist has found a peptide normally present in human hormones that will boost the intelligence of retarded persons by helping them remember.

Dr. Curt Sandman said his studies show a substance called neuropeptide can increase the memory retention of

retarded persons as much as 300 percent. Neuropeptide is not a drug in the ordinary sense—it is found naturally in human hormones; but it can be made synthetically and injected or given orally. Sandman said a person of average intelligence can boost his memory retention as much as 80 percent when given the substance. The peptide is not a “cure” for mental retardation, but it will help mentally retarded persons learn by helping them remember. Neuropeptide has been approved for human testing by the Federal Food and Drug Administration. Sandman said it will probably be two or three years before it is on the market.



The “fembots” of Las Vegas were exotic and bizarre while the bionic dog made an interesting choice as a sidekick. Now it's E-Ts.



## JAIME RIDES THE CHARIOT

*Bionic Woman* fans have surely noticed influences of von Daniken's theories (*Chariot Of The Gods*, etc.) in recent scripts. Executive producer Lee Siegel freely acknowledges the source: “We accept the premise that before human life existed on Earth, beings from other worlds visited this world and helped the animals evolve into mankind. Their presence accounts for mysteries such as Stonehenge, the Easter Island figures, the disappearance of the Mayan civilization, etc.” The first of the stories based on such ideas aired last January 14. Others are scheduled—and the premise will underlie the *BW* series (off and on) from now on. This gives the show another clear SF aspect (in addition to the bionics, which are old hat by now). Currently there are plans to do a “stupendous” 3-part fall-season opener (if the series is renewed) with an unusual number of special effects, a “mini-series” that will bring back many alien characters previously introduced. Siegel is new on the *BW* set; he replaced Harve Bennett, who left Universal during the 1977 season. Siegel was supervising producer on *\$6 Million Man*.

## THE PHYSICAL UNIVERSE—AT UCLA

Interest in the physical sciences is astronomically high in Southern California. UCLA announced an evening series—for credit or not—of seven lectures by top physicists. Individual tickets were to have been sold at the door for individual lectures, but the whole series (held in a large auditorium) was sold out in advance. Laymen, graduate students, teenagers—a broad cross-section—crowded into Moore Hall to hear lectures on gravity, the curvature of the universe, lasers, the origin of the universe, the philosophy of science, particle physics, deep-space exploration, and extraterrestrial intelligence. Dr. David Saxon, theoretical physicist and President of the University of California inadvertently explained the extraordinary interest in the subjects, when he commented that he did not blame the upsurge of pseudo-scientific endeavors—astrology, parapsychology, pyramid power,

etc.—for the bleak state of scientific knowledge among laymen in America. “That rationalism has not replaced faith today is the fault of modern scientists,” he said. “Pseudo-science is not a fraud on the human mind, but rather an indication of the failure of education.” He went so far as to claim that pseudo-science can lead to legitimate endeavors—citing the alchemy-to-chemistry evolution as an example. Perhaps the surest sign of the interest in modern science, at the series, was simply the spectacle of almost 1000 diverse audience members spellbound during a discussion of quarks, neutrinos, “taste,” “color,” “charm,” and “strangeness” in subatomic particles—in an entertaining and remarkably clear presentation by Nobel Laureate Murray Gell-Mann—discoverer of the quark quality of “strangeness.” UCLA hopes to make some of the lectures available on tape transcription.



# READ IT SLOWLY.

You'll want to. It's that good . . . it's *The Hugo Winners*: 23 speculative fiction stories that have won the science fiction equivalent of the Oscar—Arthur C. Clarke's superb story, "The Star," Jack Vance's classic, "The Dragon Masters," and Poul Anderson's award-winner, "No Truce With Kings," plus 20 more.

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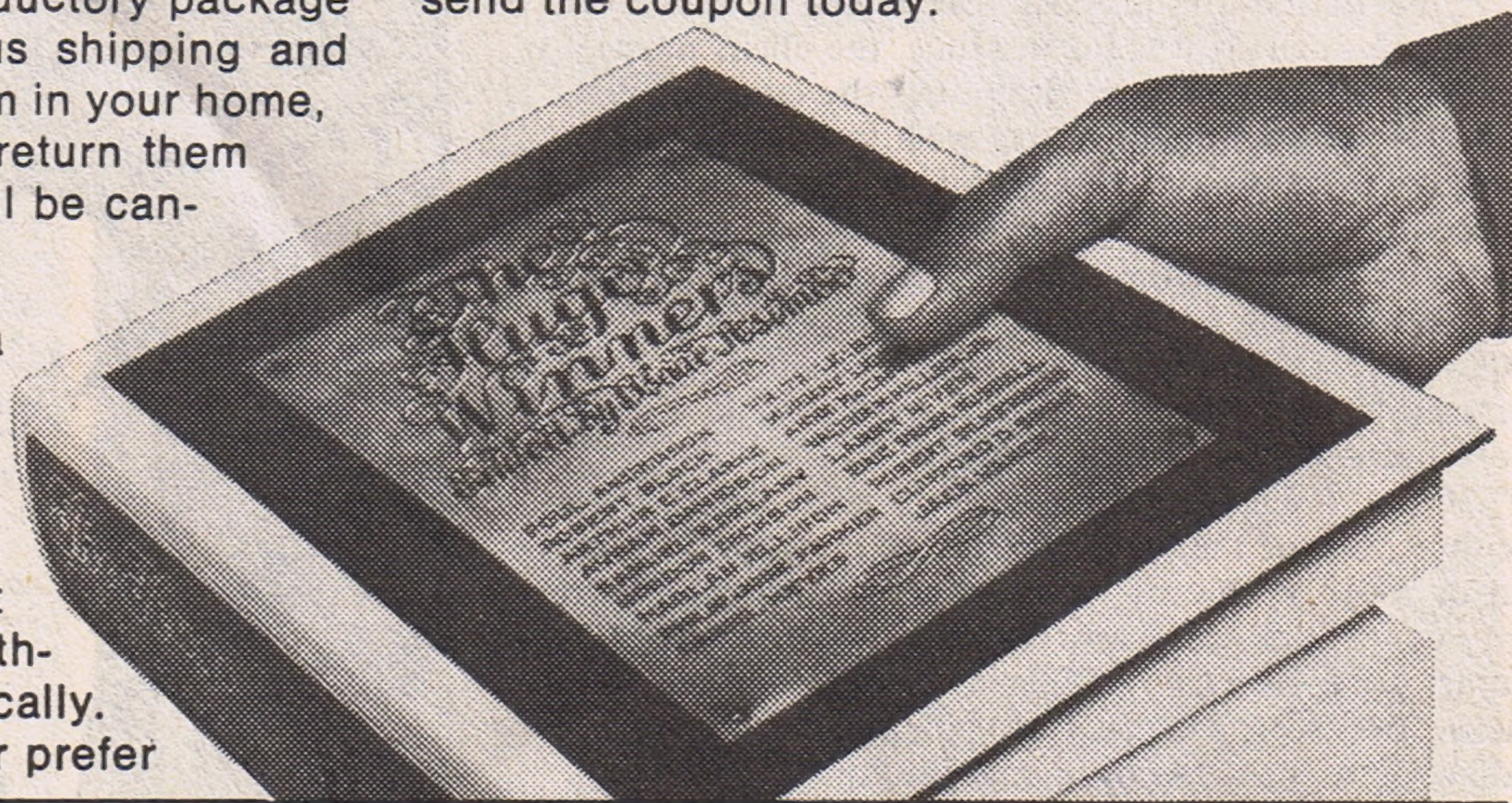
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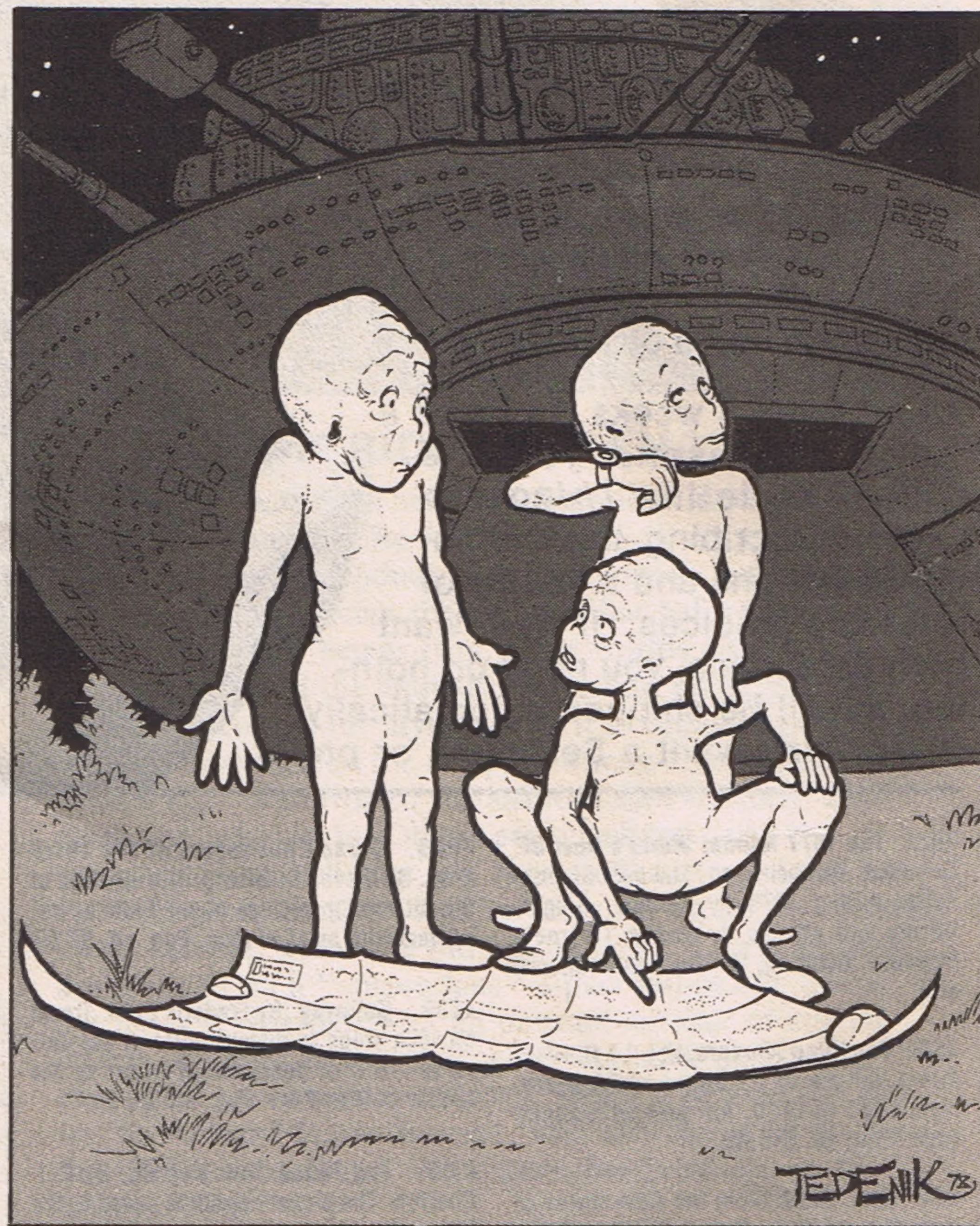
## WHO GOES THERE?

William F. Nolan, co-author of *Logan's Run*, award-winning script writer of *Burnt Offerings*, has been signed by Universal to script a "remake" of the old Howard Hawks horror-classic, *The Thing*. "This won't be just a rehash," Nolan said. "I'm going back to the original story, *Who Goes There?* by Campbell to utilize many values which were ignored the first time around." Nolan's *thing* won't be a walking talking carrot!

The basic similarity between the 1951 *Thing* and Campbell's *Who Goes There?* is the crashlanding of a saucer in the arctic.

## CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE WRONG KIND

Steven Spielberg's UFO paean *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind* is being touted as the most factually realistic saucer story ever filmed. Yet, according to some devout movie buffs, the film is chock full of *factual* flaws. During the course of the story, for instance, the aliens musically reveal to a group of eager Earthlings the latitude and longitude of a place where they wish to hold an intergalactic summit conference. The ufologists, using only the information given, deduce that Devils Tower, Wyoming is the meeting place the aliens have in mind. Of course, according to Spielberg's plot, this assumption is 100% correct. However, according to some map enthusiasts, the information is incomplete. The alien coordinates given are the numbers: 104° 44' and 30" and 40° 36' 10". What the visitors from space fail to reveal are the directions of the coordinates. Are they north, south, east or west? With only the numbers in hand, the Earth party could wind up in any of four possible locations. One contact point is in China, near Mongolia, another in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Chile, still another in the Indian Ocean near Malaysia and the fourth in North America. That little problem, according to nitpickers, is compounded by another error in map reading. In reality, Devils Tower is nowhere near the actual North American position given. The meeting place as suggested by the aliens' directions would be somewhere near Pierce, Colorado. Devils Tower is found at 104° 44' 30" W, 44° 36' 10" N, representing an error of four degrees in latitude. Unfortunately, those scant four degrees are equal to 444.5 kilometers (276 miles) in positioning . . . roughly the width of the entire state of Wyoming. With navigation like this, it's a wonder that Spielberg's alien brood made it to Earth in the first place.



Art: Ted Enik

## METEOR LOOSES MILLION POUNDS OF MUD

There are occupational hazards in acting in *any* science-fiction film. Special effects often take their toll. But stars Natalie Wood, Sean Connery, Karl Malden and Henry Fonda recently found themselves up to their eyeballs in effects, literally, while filming certain scenes for the upcoming SF disaster film, *Meteor*. For three weeks, the cast of the film was required to wade through a million pounds of mud on a specially constructed sound stage on the MGM lot. Director Ronald Neame, a likable fellow who treated the stars of his *Poseidon Adventure* in a similarly bizarre fashion, ordered a \$500,000 set constructed to house both the ooze and the actors for three weeks. The studio, second in cost only to Dino DeLaurentiis' *Kong* wall, contained the old Esther Williams swimming tank and a high speed drainage system—needed in case one of the actors got too enmeshed in his work . . . never quite coming to the surface. In *Meteor*, representatives of

both the Russian and American governments transform the subway system into a military command outpost, guiding the defense systems of the world against an onrushing meteor. When the meteor passes overhead, it levels the city above, sending an avalanche of mud pouring into the tunnel. Neame admitted the muddy matter had given him problems. "It's difficult to find something thick enough to look like mud, but thin enough to burst through when we want it to. If it's too thick, it will just ooze. If too thin, it will look like water." After a lot of screen sludge tests, the director came up with the right combination. Just prior to the actual filming of the scene, Neame summed up the experience with the following understatement: "We are obviously concerned about releasing that million pounds of mud, not only for the actors . . . it *might* knock down the whole set."



# JEWELRY OF THE THIRD KIND

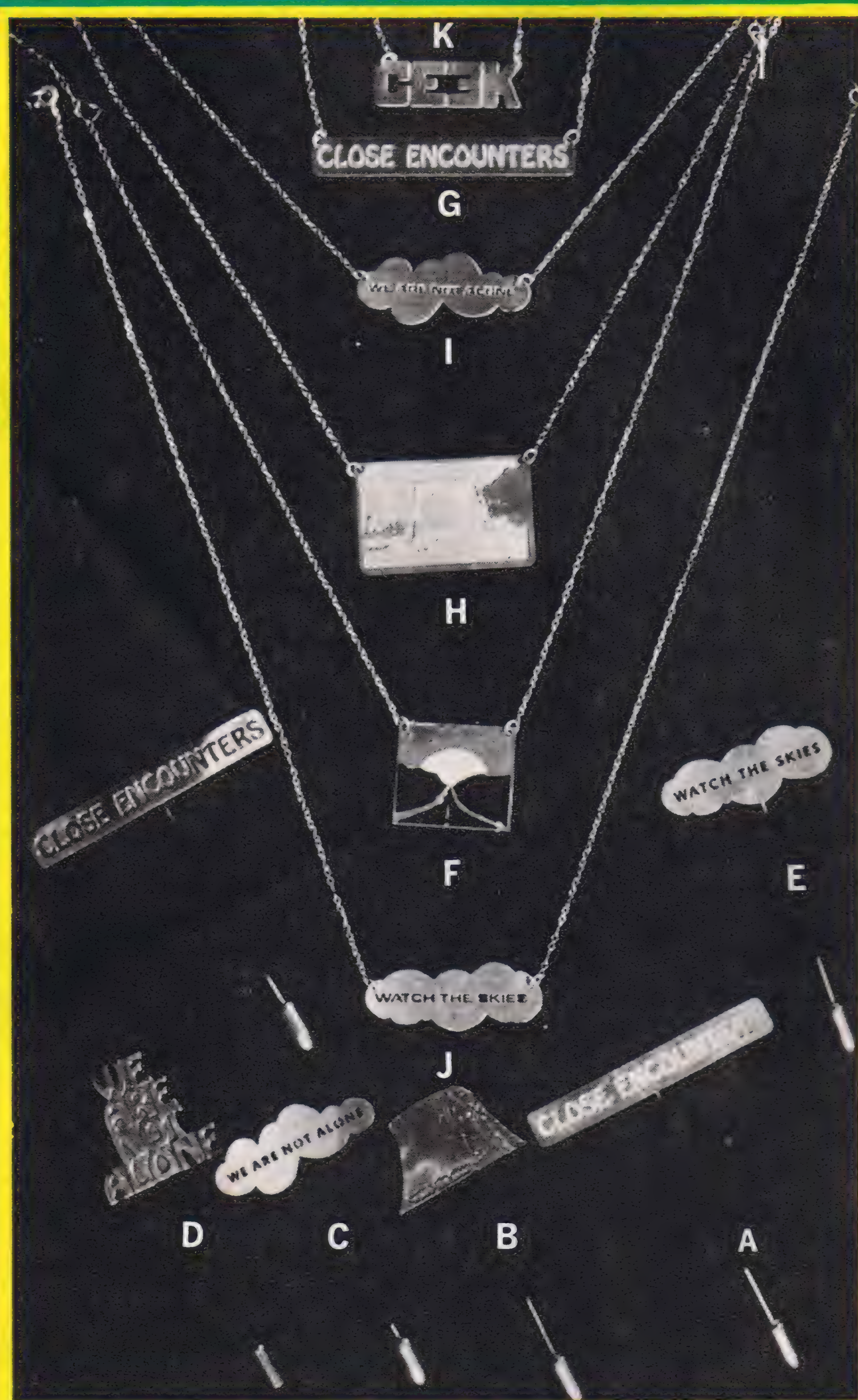
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The Mouse and his Child are surrounded by fully animated pals.

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## HEADY FABLES

Audiences across the country seem to be turning from the more pessimistic versions of supernatural apocalypse and social upheaval to the fanciful flights of fantasy found in science-fiction and fairy tales. While the major studios and fly-by-night independents hustle to supply the former in the wake of the "Star/Encounters" phenomena, a Hollywood-based Japanese production company has joined the ranks of Disney, Bakshi, and Specialty in releasing high quality, full-length animated movies to the hungry American patrons. Their 1978 offerings include the Extraordinary Adventures of *The Mouse And His Child* and Five Tales from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The former title is a deFaria/ Lockhart/ Sanrio production in association with Marakami/Wolf, and features the voices of Peter Ustinov, Cloris Leachman, Sally Kellerman, Andy Devine, Marcy Swenson, and Neville Brand. Based on the Newberry award winning book, *The Mouse And His Child* are two mechanical animals who flee the safety of the toy store in an attempt to become self-winding and find happiness with other emancipated creatures. Along the way they are helped and victimized by the likes of the fraudulent fortune-teller Mr. Frog (Devine), the tender Tin Seal (Kellerman), the narcissistic Euterpe the Parrot

(Leachman), a philosophical snapping turtle named C. Serpentine (Cliff Osmond), and the maniacal Emmanuel Wolfington Rat III (Ustinov). The animation is full and the musical production was written by Carol Mon Pere (script), Roger Kellaway (music), and Gene Lees (lyrics). The two creative teams of Walt deFaria and Warren Lockhart, and Jimmy Murakami and Fred Wolf have separately been responsible for such work as TV's *You're A Good Man Charlie Brown*, *The Borrowers*, *The Point*, *200 Motels*, and *Free To Be You and Me*. While the feature is entertaining family fare, *Metamorphoses* is far headier stuff, based on the mythological tales through which ancient man interpreted himself and his world—created within the framework of a rock *Fantasia*. The feature incorporates the contributions of The Rolling Stones, Joan Baez and The Pointer Sisters around imaginative depictions of the stuff legends are made of. Around other musical contributions supplied by Billy Goldenburg, Steve Tosh, Jim Studer, and Michael Young, eight directors guide sequences about Hades, Lucifer, Perseus, the Gorgon, Diana, Mercury, Orpheus, Apollo, and other ancient gods. Takashi, an experienced and inventive writer, director and designer, produced, directed, and wrote the treatment for this daring and complicated work, three years in the making, employing over 170 artists and animators.

## NEW FREEDOM FOR HIGH-FLYING ASTRONAUTS

How does one maneuver in the gravity-free environment of outer space? With great difficulty. Just ask any of the astronauts who partook in EVAs (extra-vehicular activities). Standard procedure calls for tethering the astronaut to his vehicle by means of bulky and unwieldy umbilical cords. The process of just exiting a craft and untangling the cords took a dangerous amount of physical exertion by the EVA astronaut on more than one space mission. Now, in the era of the Space Shuttle, crewmembers will be leaving their craft with regularity to perform a variety of tasks. So that they may be able to accomplish those tasks with a minimum of wasted effort and a maximum of precision, NASA scientists have developed the Manned Maneuvering Unit (pictured here). The unit is a "modular propulsive backpack device" that will be stowed in the shuttle's cargo bay and can be donned, doffed and serviced by a single crewmember for EVA. Since the MMU has an automatic attitude hold capability and electrical outlets for such equipment as power tools, a portable light, cameras and instrument-monitoring devices, the unit is quite versatile and adaptable to many possible payload task requirements. Now crewmen can fly unencumbered to potential work areas and transport cargo of moderate size (such as might be required for in-orbit spacecraft servicing). Another advantage is that the unit's propulsion system is a low-thrust, dry, cold gas nitrogen propellant—which would cause only minimal disturbance (if any) to a small, orbiting payload that an astronaut may be in the process of retrieving. In future applications, such as in-space assembly of large structures, the EVA crewmember can use the unit to easily position himself for supervising and inspecting both automated and manual construction.



Photo: NASA



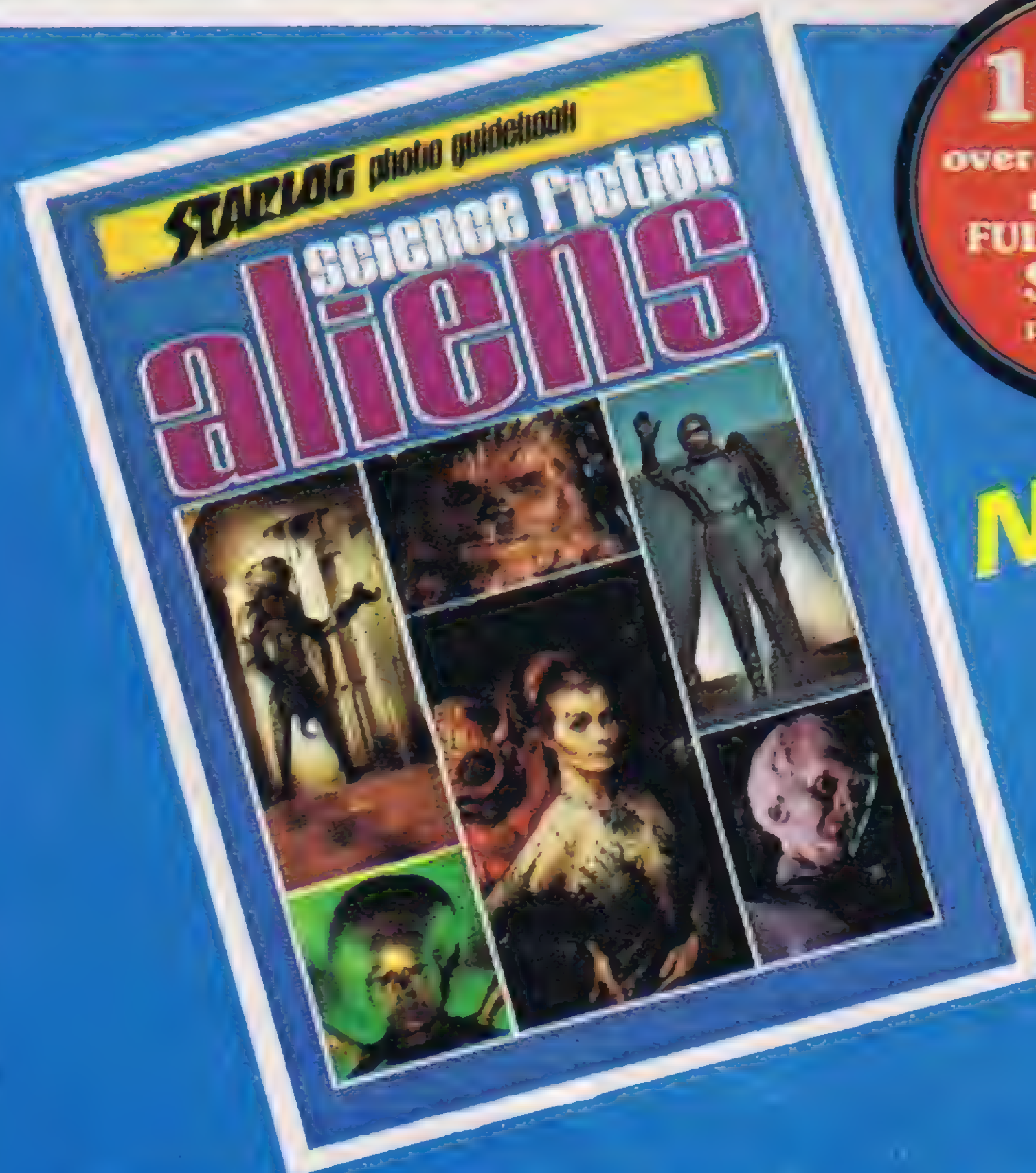
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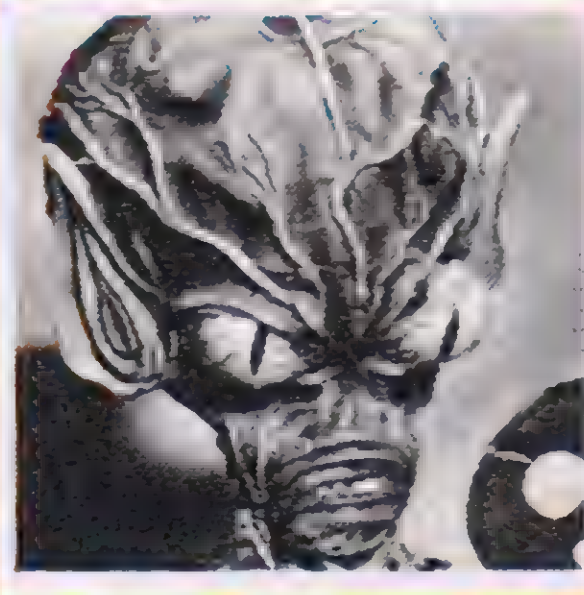
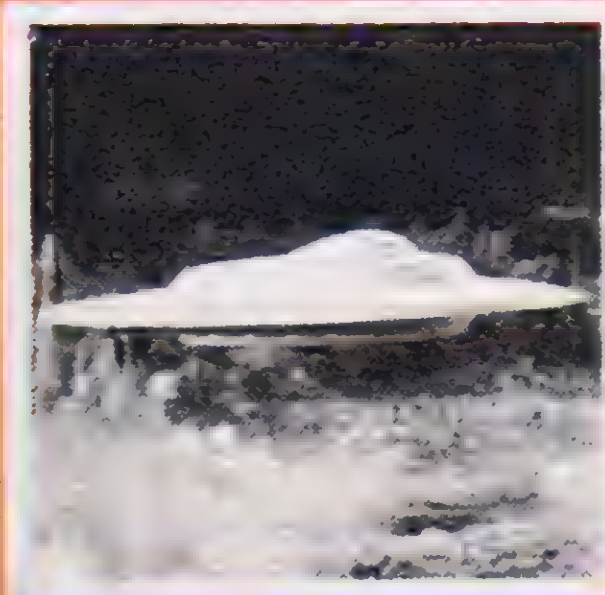


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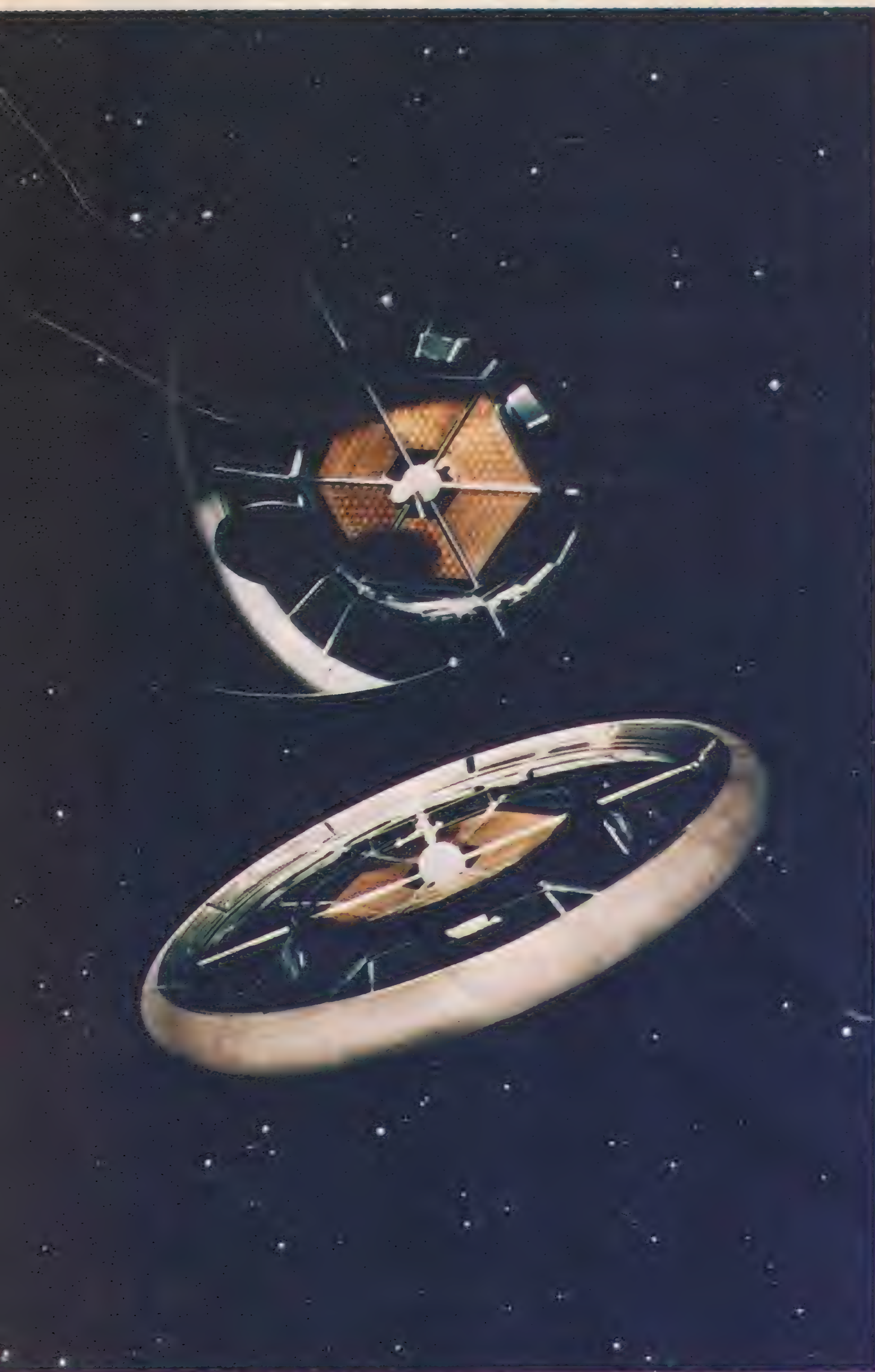
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## THE HIGH FRONTIER: HUMAN COLONIES IN SPACE



A huge mirror hangs suspended in space above the torus (donut-shaped) habitat. It reflects sunlight down into the space colony.

Photo: NASA

Bantam Books has inaugurated their new science-fact line with the paperback publication of Dr. Gerard O'Neill's controversial book *The High Frontier*, a proposal for human space habitation. O'Neill's work, which won the Phi Beta Kappa award for science in 1977 as a hardcover published by Morrow, traces the development of the first man-inhabited space colony (Island One) from its present day planning status to its final completion and full time production state shortly after the era of the Space Shuttle. One of the most impressive aspects of the Princeton University physics professor's sprawling scenario for space habitation is that *all* of it is based upon current scientific knowledge. The entire idea for space colonization, in fact, arose from a routine assignment in one of O'Neill's classes. Asking a roomful of freshmen physics students, back in '69, to find out whether Earth was the best suited environment for an industrialized society, O'Neill was somewhat shaken to discover that *all* of his pupils, independent of each other, reached the same conclusion: *space*, not Earth, was the most likely setting for Man's continuing search for progress. At that point O'Neill and a few colleagues began formulating plans and theories concerning the possibilities of Man actually living and manufacturing in outer space. Before too long, the concept of a space habitat developed; a self-contained environment situated midway between the Earth and the Moon, carrying over 10,000 workers. All of O'Neill's findings made their way into *The High Frontier* along with over sixty drawings of space-age scenes by noted illustrator Don Davis. *The High Frontier* offers O'Neill's concept of things to come: Space Shuttles bring enough materials into space to begin construction of a space work shed. A small mining colony is established on the Moon, capable of hurling lunar materials far into space to a waiting "mass catcher." Construction workers set up base in a preordained spot between the Earth and the Moon, actually assembling the first Island far above the gravitational hindrance of our planet. And finally, Island One is established; a dedicated space city inhabited by 10,000 futuristic workers . . . 4,000 of whom toil at building additional colonies, with the remaining 6,000 producing satellite power to Earth. *The High Frontier* is as exciting and thought-provoking as any science-fiction novel in existence, probably more so. After all, according to O'Neill and his growing legions of habitat enthusiasts, *this* space opera is capable of becoming a *reality* before century's end.

### 1999 CON TO HELP CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Something quite unusual will be happening at the Sheraton Hotel in Columbus, Ohio, July 28th to the 30th. An SF convention will be held where all profits will be donated to charity—instead of being kept by the convention organizers. The *Space: 1999 Convention '78* will be presented by the National Save: 1999 Alliance, a non-profit, fan-run organization. According to Jeff Jones, president of the Alliance, the convention was originally planned with the simple intention of supplying a place for 1999 fans to meet and enjoy themselves. As it stands now, after paying off expenses 50% of the profits will be divided among the guest speakers for lecture fees (which they may donate) and 50% will be donated to the Children's Hospital of Columbus, Ohio, in the name of the cast and crew of *Space: 1999*. Although the convention is not being done solely as a benefit for the hospital, to insure that the donation will be a substantial one, STARLOG's own 1999 expert, David Hirsch, has, with the invaluable assistance of Bob Mandell of ITC Entertainment, planned out an auction where all money taken in will be donated to the hospital. Among the items that will be up for bid will be some original uniforms,



Photo: © I.T.C.

Captain Scarlet is one of Gerry Anderson's most popular creations.



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With the help of two nearby TV stations that carry *Space: 1999*, ITC Entertainment will be shipping down many *uncut* episodes of 1999 and other Gerry Anderson productions (*Thunderbirds*, *Capt. Scarlet*, *Supercar*, etc.). There will be a few special surprises as well.

A minimum of six guests will be brought over from England. At press time, Nick Tate had already sent word that he would attend. Besides the regular cast members, the Alliance has also extended invitations to Gerry Anderson, Brian Johnson, and guest star Dave Prowse who appeared in the "Beta Cloud" episode and that recent blockbuster

movie that took place in a galaxy far, far away.

The number of guest stars will depend on the number of advanced tickets sold before the beginning of May. The Alliance hopes to bring in a maximum of ten guest stars.

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## NEW SCREEN SF ON THE WAY



photo: David Hutchison

The world of science-fiction continues to mushroom in the film industry, with new efforts slated for both the silver and video screens. On the tube, ABC-TV has finally given the go ahead to *Galactica*, the long awaited science-fiction swashbuckler featuring the special effects talents of John (Star Wars) Dykstra. Although the model work has been in production since the fall, ABC waited until the new year to order one three-hour and two two-hour telefilms. On the silver screen, the manic adventures of comicbookdom's man of steel, *Superman*, will not make their way to theaters this summer as originally planned. Because of some time consuming special effects, the big budgeted film will be unveiled just in time for Christmas '78. Another film that offers high flying adventure, but in a slightly different mode, is the Patrick Curtis' production *The Secret World War*. Described as a comedy-action-adventure film, *World War* tells the gruesome tale of a fleet of aliens who totally destroy the world using rock music and Marijuana gas. Bo Svenson, the burly action film star who's managed to totally destroy quite a few worlds using only his fists, is planning to star in yet another alien encounter film, *The Green People*. The movie will be shot in Italy under the directional gaze of Bruno Corbucci. Also on the drawing board is yet another update of the legendary vampire myth, *Prince Dracula*, a three million dollar comedy opus written by Nick Felix and produced by Benjamin Melniker and Richard K. Rosenberg. The tongue-in-fang opus will be filmed this summer in Dallas, Texas. Texas is also unleashing a feature presentation touted as a "first-hand science factual account of man's space journey . . ." *The Apollo File*. A documentary look at the modern race for space, this Kinderfilm production offers a wide screen, color glimpse of the cosmos as actually seen by our

Above left: John Dykstra's inner sanctum—the Industrial Light and Magic model shop with *Star Wars* miniatures in plain view. The *Galactic* craft will bear resemblance to such SW ships as the X-Wings and the Millenium Falcon. Right: The man himself.

Astronauts "up there." Hovering above good old terra firma at a slightly lower altitude are the antagonists of the forthcoming World Pictures release, *Bees*. Filmed in Mexico City, this latest variation of the buzzing-brutes-on-the-loose theme stars John Saxon and is directed by Jack Hill. A summer release is tentatively planned. One film that may not make it to summer is *The Overlords*. A science-fiction swashbuckler originally nurtured by the late William (The Manitou, Day Of The Animals) Girdler, the film was planned as a summer production, with location shooting to occur in 17 countries. Dr. R. Fred Tolstein, a professor and assistant dean of the College of Engineering at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio was contracted as technical advisor for the film. Together with several undergraduate engineering students, Tolstein was to make sure that the entire script be scientifically accurate. *The Overlords* was scheduled as a 1979 release. Girdler died in Manila while location hunting last January. No plans to scrap the production have been announced. George (Night Of The Living Dead) Romero and Dario Argento recently circumvented the usual movie press release ploy by inviting a group of eager reporters to actually watch the filming of their new, Pennsylvania-based *Dawn Of The Dead* chiller. Several lucky writers even got to play ghouls. Last, and very probably least, on the agenda of SF spectres to come are a horde of Italian science-fiction epics currently in the making . . . among the more interesting titles offered are *After The World Ended*, *Stratostars*, *Year 3000*, *The White Death*, *Pig World* and *Doctor Jekyll*. ★



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Photo: Group W Productions

## AROK RUNS, BUT NOT AMOK

If one day a 6'8" aluminum and angle-iron thing with a rubber face under a motorcycle visor appears at your door selling brushes, blame Ben Skora of Palos Hills, Illinois. Mr. Skora has invented a broad chested robot named AROK as a natural extension of his interest in electronics and parapsychology. AROK is Skora backwards, dropping the "s," and the culmination of almost thirty years of experimentation with work-saving machinery. In 1949 Skora had installed a device which started his car from the comfort of his home. Soon after, he extended his work to include the remote-controlling of the windows, windshield wipers, horn, acceleration pedal and brake. As Skora, who was then the owner of a recording studio under the name of Ecko, acquired new autos and Illinois property he expanded his new advances in leisure electronics. Completely self-taught, he installed automatic curtains and sliding doors to a new home—as well as building his living room on a turntable so it could be swung outside during pleasant weather. All he needed then was

Arok's first media appearance: January 16, 1978 on *Mike Douglas*.

something to push the buttons. So AROK was conceived and built out of appliance and auto spare parts in 1971. Starting from a frame of iron, two 12-volt car batteries were placed on platforms in the feet powering the robot's drive mechanism in the base. Installed in the base, the aluminum upper frame, and the fiberglass skull were 15 motors connected to 35 relays which controlled AROK's many abilities. His face is a rubber mask, his fingers rubber gloves (over bushing and screwjacks) and his arms are exhaust flues from dryers. Three antennae receive and transmit along FM wavelengths, a control panel harnessing AROK's 36 present functions. It can bend at the waist to 45 degrees, lift as much as 150 pounds, turn at a radius roughly equivalent to its length (approximately  $\frac{2}{3}$  feet), and reach a moving speed of 3 mph. A memory tape enables it to do a telemetered routine, and a microphone and speaker is installed in the head as well as the control panel so the operator can speak through the robot while a metallic jaw mechanism moves the rubber lips. At the moment, AROK is on the show business circuit, appearing everywhere from shopping centers to The Mike Douglas Show to The Mr. and Miss Nude America Contest. He has lifted children, displayed new drills at a trade show, and entertained his growing number of fans with his ability to walk the dog, take out the garbage, vacuum the floor and engage in witty repartee—while his master is secure behind a one-way mirror or in the next room with a control board, naturally. Mr. Skora now plans to install TV cameras in AROK's eyes and build a companion robot who will be controlled by alpha waves. Until then AROK will remain a household helper, conversation piece, demonstration device—he is even outfitted with a laser beam for ribbon cutting ceremonies—and a self-contained publicity spokesthing for the age of cybernetics. ★

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# Jim Danforth



## A Tale of Cinematic Survival by Stop Motion's Heir Apparent



As part of the Projects Unlimited team, Danforth worked on episodes of *The Outer Limits*. Above: "The Sea Of Sand" creature.



*Jack the Giant Killer* was a fanciful film patterned after *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad*. Above: Pendragon's giant is cornered. Top: Pendragon's final transformation.





Photo: © AIP

Photo: © United Artists



Left: The cyclops beast from *Journey To The 7th Planet*. Above: The Loch Ness Monster begins to grow in *The 7 Faces Of Dr. Lao*. Right: the adult monster attacks Lao.



Photo: © MGM

## By CHARLES BOGLE

Jim Danforth brings things to life for a living. Pieces of clay, dinosaurs, tentacled sea serpents and two-headed giants all spring into action when touched by his skill. Jim is a wizard, one of the leading denizens in the elite cadre of motion picture technicians known as special effects men. Through stop-motion animation, he painstakingly instills movement into his inanimate subjects, moving their limbs inch by inch, frame by frame. The finished product, as seen in such films as *The Wonderful World Of The Brothers Grimm* and *The 7 Faces Of Dr. Lao*, is magical, spellbinding and largely ignored by the motion picture industry—a fact which irks the lanky animator somewhat.

"Stop motion isn't taken for granted in Hollywood," Jim blusters. "It's ignored. The industry doesn't know anything about stop motion. The fans have a far better understanding of what goes into an animated film than most of your motion picture executives. It's just something that isn't done here anymore."

Danforth is justifiably annoyed that the stop-motion technique, a process which has brought to the screen such greats as *King Kong*, *Mighty Joe Young* and *The 7th Voyage Of Sinbad*, has been almost totally replaced in today's movie world by mechanical models and men in rubber monster suits. Stop motion is considered obsolete in many circles. And so, Jim has begun working on *Time Gate*, a modest film of his own design that just may prove to movie producers worldwide that quality stop-motion animation can be used effectively and spectacularly on a less than grandiose budget.

"The film will have a lot of interesting stop-motion effects," Jim says modestly, strolling through his small studio. "More importantly, it will juxtapose modern technology and machines with animated creatures. It has real people in it. Characters you can relate to. No one wears a turban," he smiles, wiping a wisp of blonde hair from his brow. Danforth feels that, if producers and directors would get to know the benefits of stop-motion, they wouldn't be so adverse to using it.

"Producers opt for the man in the rubber suit concept more than animation because, with a guy in a suit, they can see the effects happen," he says. "They can control it. Directors who don't want to let some animator go off with their film into a tiny animation studio are just afraid of losing control."

They all want to play Kubrick. A lot of film-makers just don't understand stop-motion and they're afraid of what they don't understand. A lot of people are afraid of spiders . . . until they find out that, with a few exceptions, they're harmless. So movie-makers resort to excuses. Stop motion is too expensive, they say. Expensive? Baloney. Ray Harryhausen and Charles [Schneer] brought the *Golden Voyage Of Sinbad* in for something like 1.3 million dollars. Heck, that's less than what Dino spent building that mechanical gorilla they used for six seconds in the new *Kong*. If you don't have a lot of money, but you have a lot of time, stop-motion is your best technique. Look at what Harryhausen manages to create. *Sinbad*. *Gwangi*. *Jason And The Argonauts*. He's magnificent."

Jim disliked the models used in *Jack the Giant Killer*. Here's one reason why.



Photo: © MGM

Photo: © United Artists

Photo: © United Artists





Above: A scene from Jim Danforth's favorite film to date, *When Dinosaurs Ruled The Earth*. Below: In his studio-office, Danforth plans his next project, *Time Gate*: "The only project . . . that I've had any creative control over."



Danforth surveys the work being done in his studio. A professional in every sense of the word, Jim is known in many circles as the smoothest stop-motion animator to come along since Harryhausen — perhaps the smoothest ever. His 'offerings' include everything from the Pillsbury Dough Boy to the rampaging prehistoric beasts in *When Dinosaurs Ruled The Earth*. His matte paintings are sought after and his three-dimensional models are revered in SFX circles.

And now he works on *Time Gate*, his first feature effort free of studio restrictions. "We should have it out in a year or so," he reveals. "I sat down, wrote the script and found a backer. It's been hard work, taking up most of my time. But you can either spend all your life going to parties and trying to be a good guy in the Hollywood circle or you can get on with what it is that motivated you to get into the business in the first place: making movies. This is the only project I've ever felt that I've had any creative control over."

Danforth's need for creative control over his stop-motion techniques has earned him the reputation of being a rather maverick individualist in a movie colony populated by somewhat less than altruistic film-makers. Spurning the rules and regulations of the movie industry, Danforth has, over the years,



championed the cause of quality animation in a tasteful, albeit iconoclastic manner. Rather than bring shoddy effects to the screen, he has, on occasion, walked away from certain productions, exiling himself to the realm of TV commercials. Last year, he raised quite a few eyebrows by resigning from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences when Dino DeLaurentiis' ape suit (*King Kong*) was nominated for a special effects Oscar. For Danforth, this was the ultimate blow to the cause of better screen effects. "It was something I had to do," he recalls.

"The last motion picture done by a Hollywood studio utilizing stop-motion effects was *Mighty Joe Young* in 1949. Everything since that time has either been an independent project, filmed overseas or farmed out to an effects company. Now, the people connected with the new *King Kong* were quite aware of stop-motion, but they just hated it. They did not like anything in the original film except the original idea. They didn't like the animation, the look of the jungle, or the dinosaurs. In other words, all the things that made *King Kong* popular in the first place, they disliked. To them it was all nonsense. So, they built a suit. OK. But to give the suit an Oscar? I had to quit."

Danforth is truly amazed at the sad state of his art in modern day Hollywood. For a stop-motion film to win any kind of award in 1978, he feels, would take a miracle. "There are twenty or thirty people on the effects committee and some of them are very knowledgeable. But the problem is: when the committee is shown excerpts from the effects films, the people on the committee (who have done *superb* work in their fields. I won't mention names but you'd recognize them) look at the film clips and *don't know how the effects are done!*"

Jim continues the horrific tale incredulously. "They'd look at the *Golden Voyage Of Sinbad* and, during a break, I'd hear them say: 'The Griffin? Oh, I know how that was done. It was a full-sized mechanical, then a man in a suit.' What can you do? They're even given little pamphlets than *tell* them how everything is done. Now, that some of them would think that it was a full-sized mechanical construction not only means they don't understand anything about mechanical models (because you could never make anything that big work at that speed) but it means that the process projection work fooled them completely. They didn't vote for the film in the category of 'Process' or 'Full-Sized Mechanical.' It's a form of mental fogging on the committee's part. If it had been sloppier or had a more obvious look to it, they might have voted for it. But when it's too overwhelming, they just don't know what to do. Their minds short circuit. To my knowledge,

stop-motion animation has won an Academy Award only once: *Mighty Joe Young*. *Tom Thumb* won one but that was for opticals, not stop-motion."

With the stop-motion faction of effects virtually ignored by the movie industry, Danforth decided it was time to go it alone. "I realized it was important to get the opportunity where I felt I could do what I wanted and give the audiences what they wanted to see. I just took a look around me and said 'This isn't for me.'"

And *Time Gate* was conceived. The movie will brim with animated effects, but Danforth wants to make it known that the movie will be more than just an exercise in optical art. "I have to go back to when I first started out. I tried everything. Hand puppets. Lizards. Makeup. I didn't become an animator because I always wanted to become an animator. Animation was the only process that allowed creative control. I've always said that I'm not an advocate of animation because I'm an animator but just the other way around."

For Danforth, the introduction to the wondrous world of movie magic occurred when he was twelve. "Three things happened," he recalls. "I saw *King Kong* in the 1952 re-release, I saw the *Thief Of Baghdad* the same summer at a kiddie matinee and I ran across a Kodak book on home movie-making that had a couple of very good chapters in it on animation, both cartoon and puppet animation. Those three factors, coupled with the fact that my dad had an old eight-millimeter camera, sort of got me started. I never had any formal training. I just started playing around with it."

Young Danforth began by building and animating clay dinosaurs, frame by frame and showing the home movies to his friends. ("I convinced myself that they weren't too awful.") Moving to Southern California while in high school, the animator-to-be launched a

Photos: © MGM



In George Pal's *The Wonderful World Of The Brother's Grimm*, the Projects Unlimited team brought this fiery dragon to "life."



full frontal assault on the Hollywood community. "I began calling every studio for advice," Jim laughs. "I remember calling Lin Dunn (one of Hollywood's legendary matte painters), who talked to me for about an hour and gave me a lot of information about traveling mattes."

Danforth continued experimenting, finally coming up with a twenty-five minute film with synchronized sound on a separate, 7½-inch tape. A prehistoric time-travel film, Jim began showing it around the local high school. "We always had to slow down or speed up the projector to keep it in synch with the soundtrack," Danforth winces. "But we got pretty good response at the high school."





Jim Danforth brought to life the terrifying beetle-warrior in *Flesh Gordon*. A dueling scene in the film evoked memories of *Sinbad*.

Encouraged, Jim began filming different scenes, putting the best on a master reel. Showing the reel to anyone who had time to watch, he began making the rounds at the studios, hoping for a summer job. Miraculously, a job did open up at Clokey Films, the studio that produced both *Gumby* and *Davy And Goliath* for TV. Though still in his teens, Jim began to work in SFX professionally. After a short apprenticeship at Clokey, the teenager suddenly found himself on the set of *The Time Machine*. "Projects Unlimited a special effects outfit headed by Gene Warren, Wah Chang and Tim Barr were doing the effects. A good friend of mine from Clokey, Ralph Rodine, saw they were short-handed and said 'Gee, I know a young person who'd probably enjoy this.' I worked three weeks on the movie as an extra pair of hands. I did some motion camera dollying. That was my first feature film."

When *The Time Machine* was finished, Jim suddenly found himself back to square one out of luck and out of work. The people at Projects Unlimited were impressed enough with Danforth's talents to call him back a few months later for some work on *Jack The Giant Killer*. It was on that film that Jim first learned the bittersweet facts of the special effects business—where artistry often loses out to accounting. "The models on *Jack The Giant Killer* were TERRIBLE," Jim moans. "Awful. They weren't built from scratch. They used all the *King Kong* armatures. It was a Howard A. Anderson contract and that company had the rights to all the old *King Kong* models. Plus, *King Kong* had a lot of extra pieces, boxes of joints. The monsters were all pieced together."

"I couldn't believe it. Everyone at the studio thought the models were very fine. In fact, one day, they were just

finishing up the sea monster construction. It was their third model, the first two had been rejected. The first was made and animated and then rejected. The second one was sculpted in clay and they were just going to build armatures for it when the producers rejected it. (I liked it.) Wah Chang was finishing up the third one, the one appearing in the film, when Tim Barr walked in.

"He started talking to me. 'This business isn't all fun and games, kid. There's a lot of heartache. For instance, the producer of this film didn't really know what he wanted to do with the sea monster. But if you've been in the business for as long a time as Wah has, then OCCASIONALLY you get to do things your own way. Now the models in this movie aren't very good because we had no control over the design. But this sea monster . . . They didn't know what they wanted so they turned it over to Wah and he's designed this really excellent sea monster. And so, this is my lesson to you . . . if you're patient, keep your mouth shut and stay in this business long enough, someday you may get one of these rare opportunities.'

"And I'm looking at this model and it's the joke of all time. It's the worst of the three. It made me nuts. I left there thinking 'Is it me?' I mean, it was all so obvious to me. Yet, here were these adults with their reputations at stake, nodding their heads. When you're young and have no frame of reference you either have to be very confused or you have to be a lunatic megalomaniac to believe that you're artistically right against all that crap. Eventually, I got enough evidence to believe that there was something wrong with that perception."

Danforth worked, on and off, for Projects Unlimited for five years—always struggling to maintain some semblance of artistic integrity in all his assignments. His credits as both an independent artist and a Projects staffer grew: *The Wonderful World Of The*

*Brothers Grimm*, *Master Of The World*, *It's A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World* (the fire engine ladder sequence originally supervised by Willis O'Brien, creator of *Kong*, and finished by Danforth and Marcel Degado), *The Outer Limits*, *Goliath and the Dragon*, *Journey to the 7th Planet* and countless commercials.

Danforth's first real run-in with the corporate mentality and his first real split with Projects Unlimited occurred during the filming of *The 7 Faces Of Dr. Lao*, a motion picture which offered the world a fantastic view of the Loch Ness Monster." It was during *Dr. Lao* that Projects fired me," Jim remembers. "It was over the stop-motion scenes, mostly centering around the Loch Ness creature. I had an arrangement with Gene Warren to supervise the set-up of the effects scenes. We had sort of a verbal agreement that we'd do tests of every scene: composites, rear-screen projection, traveling mattes. It was arranged that George Pal would view the tests and decide which process he preferred. Gene left on vacation for a while and, apparently, hadn't told anyone about our deal.

So there was this big production meeting about the effects, to which I was not invited. One of my friends, a camera assistant said 'Oh, we're not going to do process. I refused to do it. Jim doesn't know what he's talking about.' So they came out of this meeting and said 'no process.' I said 'Wait a minute. That wasn't the deal.' So we had a big argument over it and I told them to get someone else to do the picture and I went home. Later, I thought that I had been a little rash and I called them up and they said, 'Sure, come on back and do the animation.'

"I sculpted the Loch Ness Monster but I didn't design it. I was never happy with that design. I had submitted designs that I thought were preferable but no one would show them to Pal. Later he saw them and said they were better than the ones used, but at the time, I was pretty well blocked off. After I finished the animation sequences Projects said 'Well, since you walked out, we're going to lay you off.'"

Danforth went to Universal where, in the Art and Miniature Department, he worked on *Father Goose*, *The Warlord*, *Strange Bedfellows*, and, later, worked with mastercraftsman Al Whitlock in the Matte Department. Soon, Projects Unlimited called him back for *Around The World Under The Sea*. It wasn't long before artistic differences arose once again. "We still couldn't agree on anything," Jim laughs. "They wanted to shoot everything underwater. I told them, before you do that, let me show you what can be done 'dry.' I told them that I agreed with them that the best way to shoot the effects would be underwater but we didn't have the budget to do it correctly. Why not do a

Photo: © Mammoth



B-plus dry job, rather than a C-minus wet? They did it their way. Eventually, they found they had to film it dry. They didn't ask me to help. After that film, the company closed down. There had been so much dissension within the ranks that it became counterproductive. Fortunately, I left before they disbanded, and I joined Cascade Films."

At Cascade, the multifaceted effects man designed and animated the original Pillsbury Dough Boy for three years. He then turned his attention to the highlight of his career, *When Dinosaurs Ruled The Earth*, an epic tale of man vs. prehistoric terror. "That was the first film that ever had effects in it that I felt represented what I wanted to do. I like some of my animation in *Brothers Grimm* very much and I was pleased with the texture of the Loch Ness monster and the little people in *Dr. Lao*. But overall, *Dinosaurs* is the only film I would point to and say 'Hey, yeah, that's Jim Danforth's work.'"

Unfortunately, following the release of *Dinosaurs*, the SFX field in Hollywood nearly went dry in terms of animation. "That was a very bad time," recalls Jim. "That was a period when absolutely nothing was happening. Harryhausen had the same experience after *Gwangi*. There was a time when nobody wanted to back those pictures anymore. I worked on a couple of movies, did a lot of commercials, matte

paintings for films like *Earth II*, *Kung Fu*, *Portnoy's Complaint*. I ran the effects department at Cascade for a year. Directed a TV commercial. I spent two years writing a script to *At The Earth's Core* which I never got to produce because I was beaten to the punch by Amicus. You manage to survive when you get your act together."

While jumping from one job to another, Jim managed to continue to champion the cause of quality special effects and come up with the basic story line for *Time Gate*. He thinks that the current special effects boom and the chance for some true stop-motion artistry in his own film may benefit the state of the art somewhat, but he's cautious. "Right now I'm happy I stuck with my profession because things are going my way. But there have been times when I had to shake the piggy bank and hope that there was enough money that I could go to the Speedy Burger, where they have 25c hamburgers, and get one for me and my wife."

Aware of the thousands of home-movie buffs who ponder a career in professional screen effects, Danforth encourages them to join the wondrous realm, but cautiously. "I'd suggest that anyone thinking of stop-motion work as a career should give it serious consideration," he smiles. "Then, they should try to talk themselves out of it."

"There's a lot of work now because of *Star Wars* but what happens after this boom is over? You see, when I started out, there wasn't anyone else. There were the old-line professionals, the Marcel Delgados, the Gene Warrens, the Ray Harryhausens and me. I was the young one. And now I'm not so young anymore but there are three dozen people out here in the same position I was in in 1957. It's a wonderful profession if you can make it work for you. But it's also very frustrating and, rather than being frustrated, I think they should consider what their opportunities and options are." Jim considers the seriousness of his statement and adds with a chuckle, "If they have contacts in the industry or if their uncle is a producer, then go right ahead."

The six-footer walks across the tiny studio. "But I'd never really pick another profession. An animator has to be a director, an actor and a writer. Your thoughts, your movements all become enmeshed within your animation."

The small California studio reverberates with the sound of saws and hammers. A dozen or so technicians work feverishly on the construction of sets, both full-size and miniature. Painted backdrops and small matte paintings litter the area. A movie is being born. Standing in a relatively quiet corner, Danforth surveys the scene. "Yeah, I'm happy I've stuck with it." ★

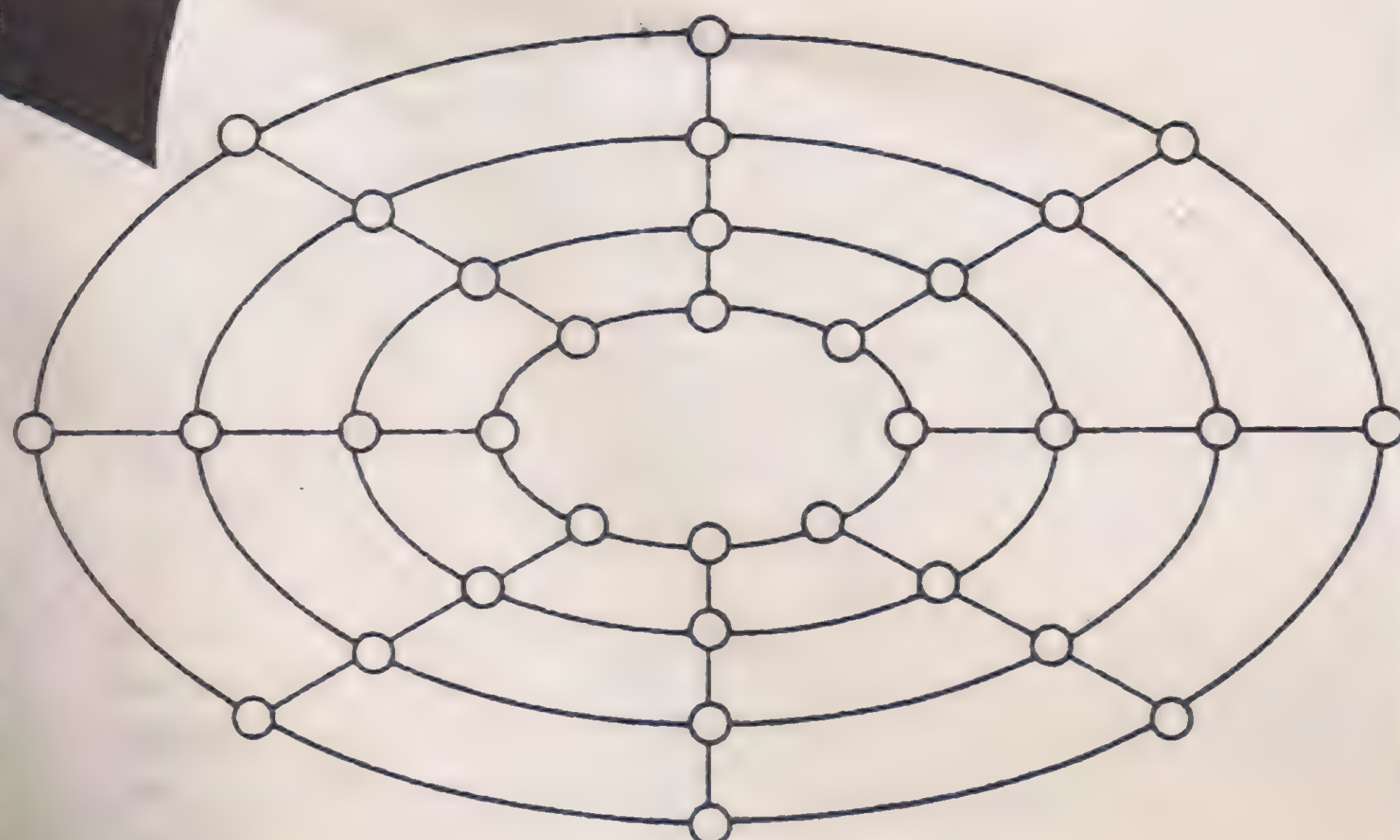
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# THE INCREDIBLE MELTING MAN

## The Face You'll Never Forget...

By GERALD MORRIS

A lone fisherman relaxes in the dense woodlands of southern California. The only sound heard . . . the muted thrashing of the river swirling before him. From the underbrush lurches a second, menacing figure. The sportsman turns, his mouth agape. He is confronted with the spectre of Col. Steven West, former astronaut and present-day *Incredible Melting Man* or, as he is described by American International Pictures, "The Face You'll Never Forget . . . The First New Horror Creature." Obviously unaware of the horrific intruder's celluloid status, the illfated fisherman struggles for his life. The Melting Man promptly rips off the hapless human's head and tosses it aside. A star is born.

*The Incredible Melting Man* is AIP's newest SF chiller, a modern-day tale of terror that harkens back to the action-adventure science-horror films of the fifties. The bizarre saga of liquified life begins when astronaut Steven West (Alex Rebar) returns triumphant from a historic flight to the planet Saturn. Landing on Earth, he suddenly becomes

ill and is rushed to a nearby hospital. Doctors are puzzled by West's condition. They theorize it is some sort of space bacteria, probably found on Saturn, that is causing a change in the astronaut's physical makeup . . . a change that is causing West's flesh to actually *melt*!!

Much to everyone's dismay, the putrifying patient escapes his confines and runs into the surrounding woodlands. Not long afterwards, the small community is terrorized by an unseen marauding animal which attacks and partially devours its victims. After a few more gruesome killings, doctors at the hospital deduce that the deranged killer is not an animal but a frighteningly transformed Steve West . . . forced to kill and consume the flesh of his victims in order to slow down the rate of his own deterioration.

The Air Force attempts to keep the matter from the local police and press. In conjunction with the hospital staff, they unsuccessfully try to corner the astronaut before any more killings can occur. As the elusive West's hunger grows, so does the number of victims. Eventually, the sheriff of the town is in-

formed of the gruesome goings on. By now, West's desire for flesh is overwhelming and the gooey creature drips death wherever he goes. Pursued by a posse of police, Air Force officials, doctors and local vigilantes, Steve is chased into a power plant. There, amidst high tension wires and towers, he is given a choice . . . take his chance with the human authorities or opt for a quick deep-frying courtesy of the high voltage equipment at arm's length. *The Incredible Melting Man* ends on a jarring note, leaving audiences with the impression that, although West's face may not be all that memorable for a screen star, his message certainly is.

"It's pretty gory stuff," laughs Rick Baker, one of the fastest rising young makeup men in Hollywood today and creator of *The Incredible Melting Man*'s horrifying profile. "People who like nasty horror movies will enjoy it." Baker, perhaps best known for his design, construction and portrayal of *King Kong* in the Dino DeLaurentiis version, acknowledges that the intricacies involved in creating Steve West's collapsing visage were fairly difficult to pull off for the film. "It was a really fun movie to do and I really liked the producers," he says. "But it's a low-budget movie and, no matter what you do, it looks like a low-budget movie. I had a three-hour makeup involved here and maybe fifteen or twenty minutes for its application. So, the final makeup is not all that it could have been. We made a lot of appliances and designed a lot of effects that we couldn't use because we just didn't have the time."

Rick's involvement with the *Melting*

Returning from a trip to Saturn, Col. Steven West is transformed into a monster.



### THE INCREDIBLE MELTING MAN

**THE INCREDIBLE MELTING MAN:** An American International Pictures release. 1977. Color by Movielab. 86 minutes. Produced by Samuel W. Gelfman and Max J. Rosenberg. Written and Directed by William Sachs. Music Composed and Conducted by Arlon Ober. Special Effects and Makeup by Rick Baker. Special Effects by Harry Woolman. Director Of Photography: Willy Curtis. Film Editor: James Beshears.

Col. Steve West . . . . . Alex Rebar  
Dr. Ted Nelson . . . . . Burr DeBenning  
General Perry . . . . . Myron Healey  
Sheriff Blake . . . . . Michael Alldredge  
Judy Nelson . . . . . Ann Sweeny  
Dr. Loring . . . . . Lisle Wilson  
The Model . . . . . Rainbeaux Smith  
Carol . . . . . Julie Drazen

Photos: © AIP



*Man* dates back to when he was still cavorting about on the *Kong* set. "Bill Sachs had seen some of the effects I had designed for *Squirm*. He sent me the script during the filming of *Kong*. At that time it was entitled *The Ghoul From Outer Space*, which is just about as bad as you can get. I just looked at it and thought 'Gee, I think I'm past that stage of my career where I have to do pictures that sound like this.' I wasn't even going to read it. But I did, and I thought it had some interesting effects going for it. But I thought, they probably couldn't afford to do everything correctly. I gave them my bid. And Sachs wanted me to do it no matter what the cost." Rick consented to create the Melting Man.

According to the script, the putrification process reverses itself only when the unlucky astronaut has consumed enough flesh and blood to offset his own loss. Baker immediately began work on inventing a makeup that would portray Col. West in his varying stages of disintegration. Budget problems, however, occasionally got in the way of progress. "We invented the disease from space so I could do the makeup in a way that would make sense. I designed it, first using a lifemask of myself just to develop the melting process. It worked very well. I came up with this synthetic flesh material that was poured onto a foam rubber appliance. I had a

skull with veins and bones protruding completely covered with the flesh. It solidified, looking quite normal. When it heated up, it melted at room temperature. It poured and dripped out of the face, exposing the bone underneath. It stuck to people's fingers. Ghastly. Great. But, when it came down to it, we didn't have the time to use it properly in the film so we used rubber masks with Karo syrup poured all over it. It wasn't exactly what I had in mind," he smiles.

In spite of various limitations, Baker managed to conjure up some memorable effects for the motion picture. "There's a great scene involving a fisherman which I hope finds its way into the final print of the film. A fisherman [played by one of the movie's producers, Sam Gelfman] gets his head ripped off by the Melting Man. It's thrown into a river. It goes downstream and over a waterfall. It hits the rocks below and splits open. I kept telling everyone, 'I can do this, but it's not going to be easy to get his head to open nicely . . . like a real head and not like a coconut.' They let me do it correctly, but they shot it from a couple of different angles. In one angle, you don't even see the head hit the bottom. In the cut of the film I saw, the head shattered and it looked fine. We did some other strange effects as well. The Melting Man loses an arm. That was pretty weird. And, of course, he eats his

(Continued on page 74)



Above: Alex Rebar is a rather dashing chap until (below) he falls into the creative hands of makeup artist Rick Baker. At the bottom of the page, the new Alex goes to work.







# Virgil Finlay: Master of Fantasy

Above: A detail from a Finlay montage of horror and fantasy characters. Below: Illo for Murray Leinster's 1953 "The Transhuman."

By GERRY DE LA REE

When Virgil Finlay died at age 56 on January 18, 1971, he left behind him thirty-five years of fantasy and science-fiction artwork—and a reputation as the most meticulous pulp magazine illustrator of his generation.

Most of the readers of *Starlog* were not around in 1935 when Finlay sold his first professional drawings to *Weird Tales* magazine. Within only a year he had established himself as being the finest black-and-white illustrator in his chosen field.

His use of the stipple and cross-hatch techniques, and an ability to enhance stories with his unique drawings quickly

rocketed him to the top. Over the years many artists would attempt to duplicate Finlay's techniques, but none ever attained the quality that was the trademark of Finlay's finest efforts.

Even Frank Kelly Freas, ten-time winner of the "Hugo" as science-fiction's top illustrator, admitted in a recently published book of his artwork that his one experiment with Finlay's stipple technique—that of using small, individually placed dots of ink to create delicate shading—earned him a new respect for Virgil's drawings. "It became very clear to me that I would never give Finlay any competition. Foosh!—what a lot of work all those blasted little dots were!"





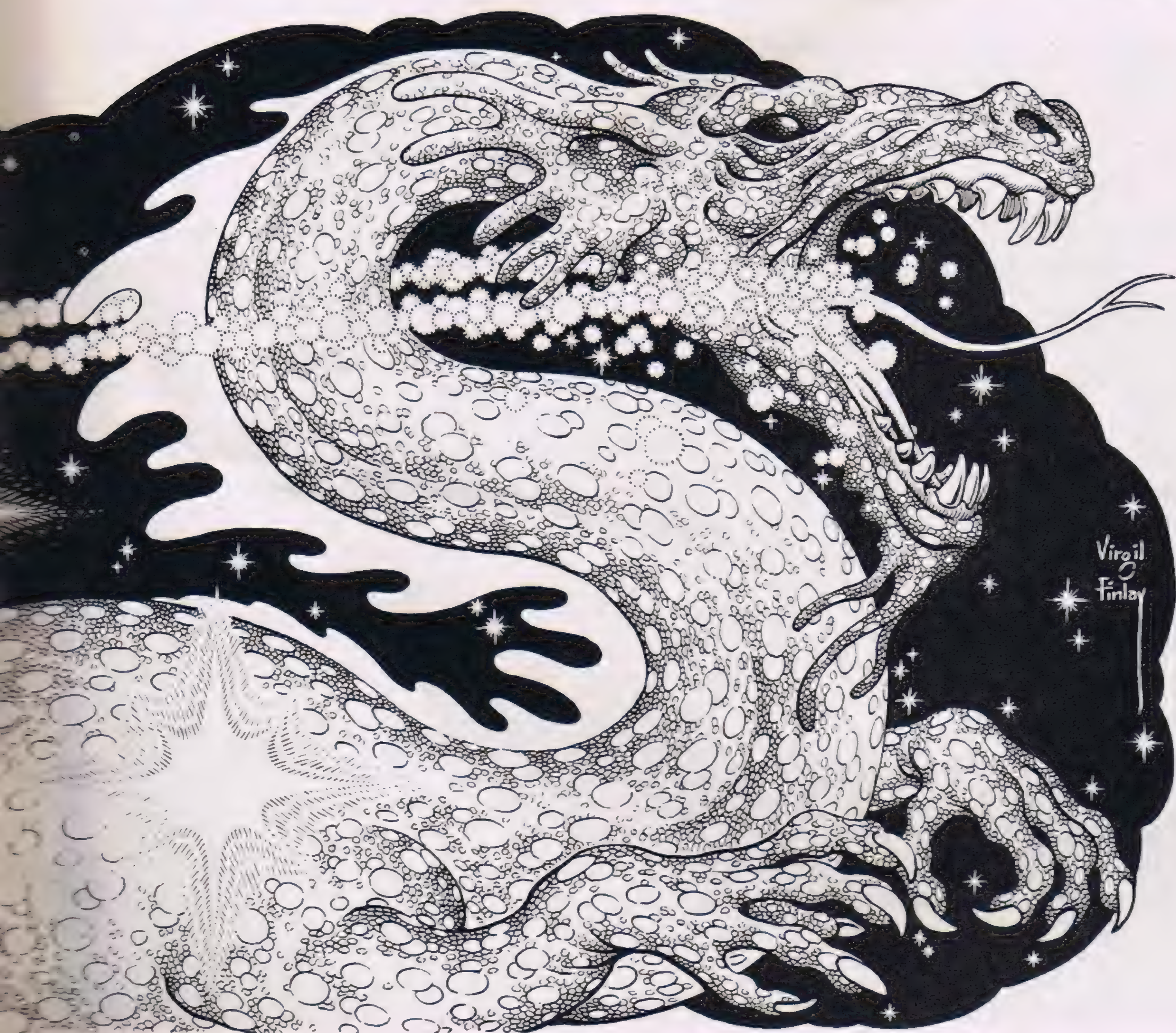


Left: A portrait of Virgil Finlay done in memorium in 1971 by artist Charlie McGill. Right: A detail from a 1953 illo for Ayn Rand's *Anthem*. Below: A 1953 Finlay illustration for Donald Vieweg's "The Talkie Dolls."



As Finlay himself explained his work, black-and-white drawings were done in a variety of techniques, employing pen, brush, spatter, lithographic pencils, sponges, and knives on a variety of paper; the majority were done on scratchboard. His color work was generally done in oil color thinned with quick drying siccativ, and sometimes combinations of ink, watercolor, gouache, and oil.

The stipple technique, which he refined throughout his career, he explained this way: "Using a 290 lithographic pen (which has an extremely fine point), I dip the pen in India ink and allow only the liquid to touch the drawing surface, which is normally



Left: Finlay illustration for Dane Rudhyar's 1957 "How to Shape Your Future." Right: Montage detail.

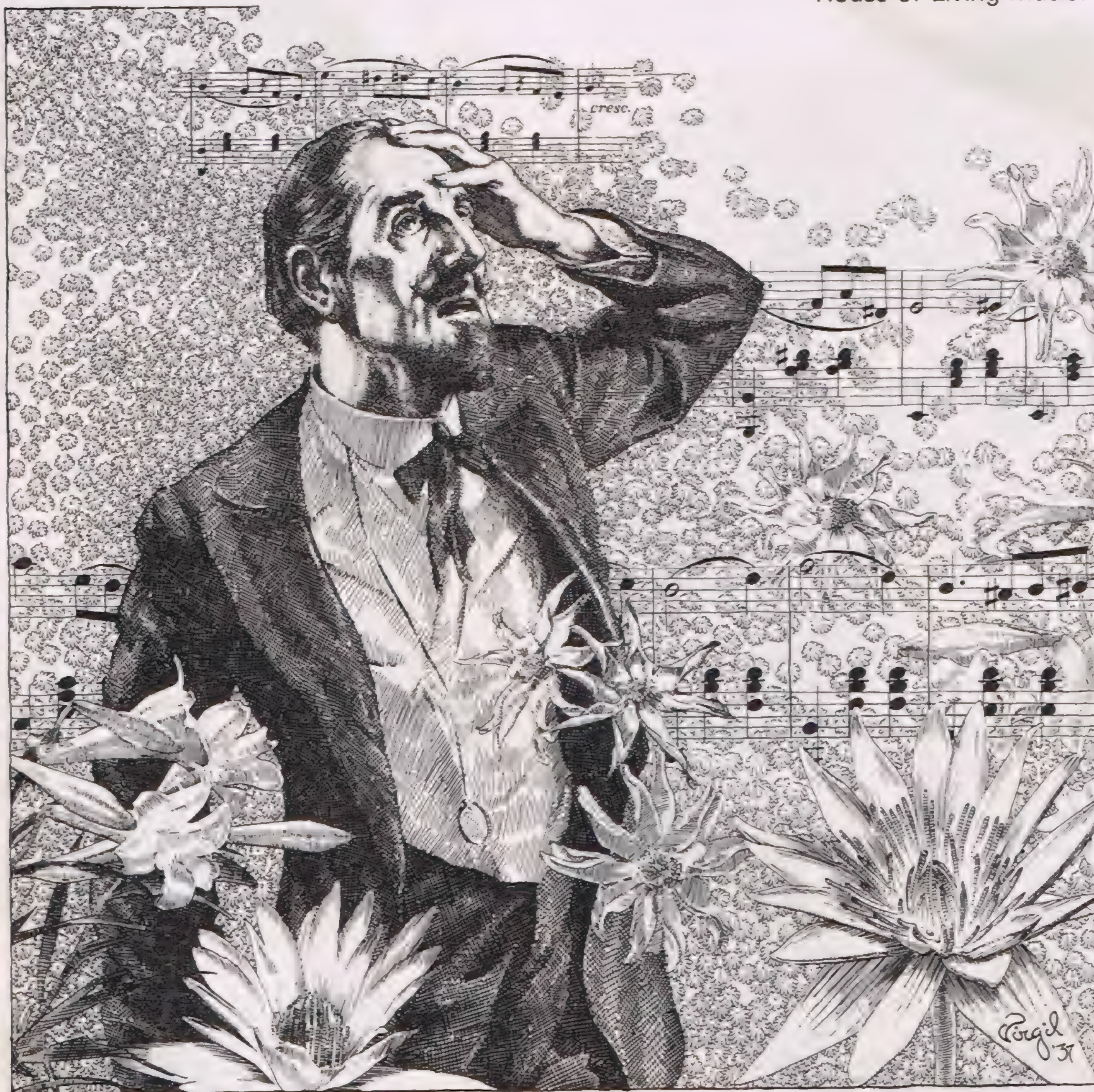






Top left: Finlay illustrated Elmer Brown Mason's 1949 story "Black Butterflies."

Top right: 1964 illo for Tolkien's *Hobbit*. Below: Edmund Hamilton's 1938 "House of Living Music."



scratchboard. The point is then wiped clean and re-dipped for the next dot." Obviously, this was a time-consuming operation. Today many artists obtain a similar effect with the use of stipple-surface paper. But study under a magnifying glass will quickly determine one method from the other.

Even in the final year of his life, when pain often limited his time at the drawing board, Finlay claimed he was able to make use of the stipple without the aid of a magnifying glass. During most of his career, his magazine drawings were done to the exact size they were to be published at. Attempts by some publishers to enlarge these small drawings have resulted in ghastly distortions of his work.

Finlay's excellent knowledge of anatomy resulted in human and animal figures that seemed to literally leap off the page. He combined alien creatures, weird settings, and a vivid imagination with an ability to accurately illustrate scenes from almost any story. His color work was not always as successful as his black and white drawings, but he still created many outstanding magazine covers. If you own a Finlay cover original you have a collector's item—there just are not that many in existence.

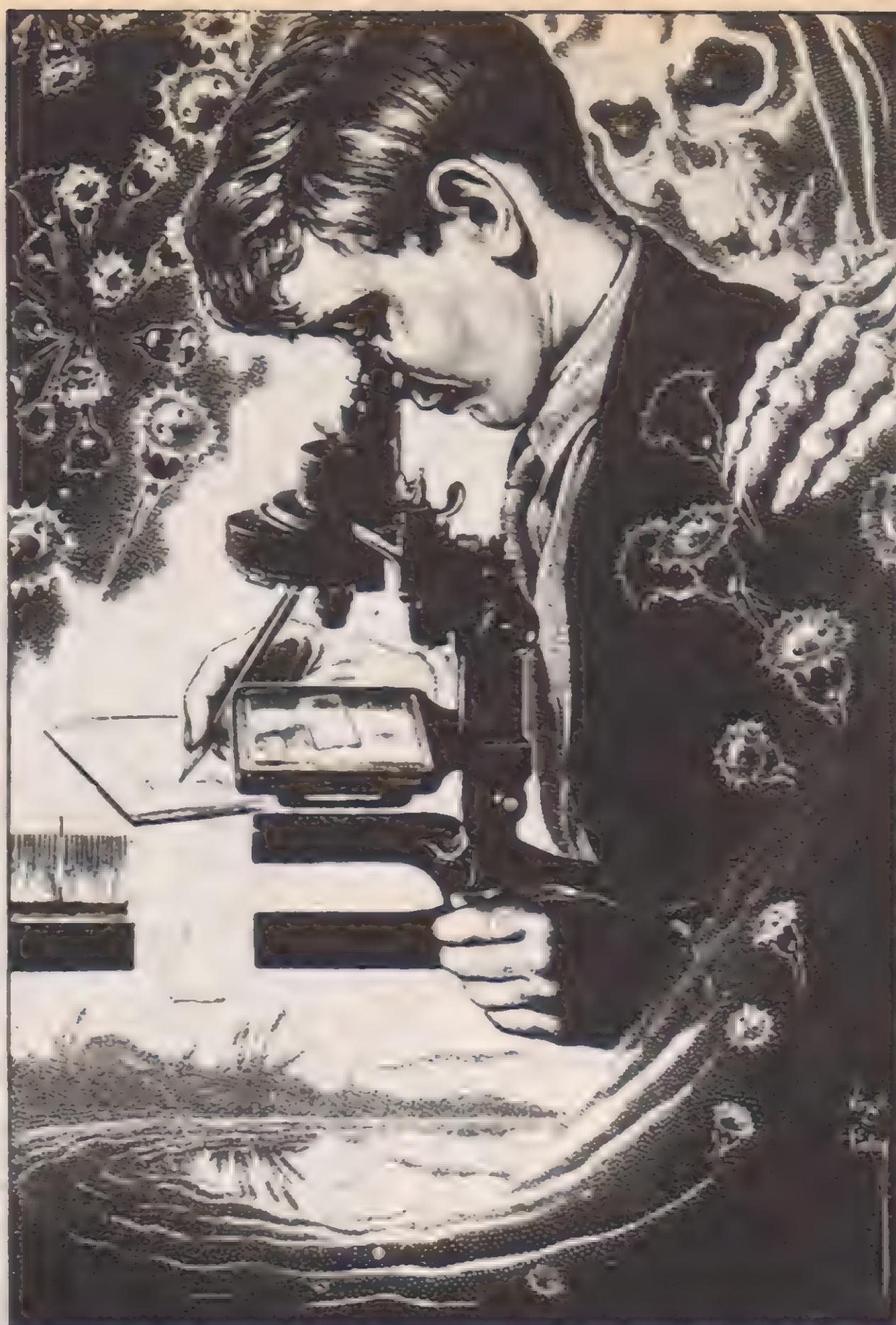
But many of the artist's most detailed drawings were all but ruined by the cheap pulp paper used by the fiction



magazines of the 1930s and 1940s. And the rates paid by the magazines were distressingly low.

During the last decade of his life, Finlay moved to higher paying markets such as Doubleday and various astrology magazines, contributing some sixty drawings to the former and almost 200 interiors and covers to the latter. During this period he continued to work for most of the few science-fiction magazines still appearing, but made use of a simple line style of drawing that was far less time-consuming than the techniques employed during the peak years of his fantasy career. He saved the fine pen and ink work for the better paying publishers.

Over the years, Finlay illustrated stories by most of the top writers in the field, including H. P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, Robert Bloch, Edmond Hamilton, Henry Kuttner, C. L. Moore, Seabury Quinn, Jack Williamson, Carl Jacobi, Robert E. Howard, August Derleth, A. Merritt, George Allan England, John Taine, H. Rider Haggard, H. G. Wells, Talbot Mundy, Arthur Conan Doyle, Murray Leinster, Edgar Rice Burroughs, John Collier, E. F. Benson, Manly Wade Wellman, Stanley G. Weinbaum, James Blish, Frank Belknap Long, L. Ron Hubbard, Jack Vance, Leigh Brackett, Ray Cummings, Ray Bradbury, John D. MacDonald, E. E. Smith, Ben Bova, Arthur C. Clarke, Otis Adelbert Kline, Theodore Sturgeon, L. Sprague de Camp, Fletcher Pratt, Edgar Allan Poe, and even a chap named William Shakespeare. The list is



Symbols of life and death surround character in Robert Abernathy's 1953 "The Rotifers."

almost endless.

During his career Finlay appeared in virtually every major science-fiction or fantasy magazine published. For *Weird Tales* he did some 220 interiors and 20 covers. For *Famous Fantastic Mysteries* he turned out more than 200 black and white drawings and 27 covers. Other major markets in the 1940-60 period were *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, *Amazing Stories*, *Fantastic Adventures*, *Startling Stories*, *Fantastic Novels*, *Fantastic Story Quarterly*, *Galaxy*, *If*, *Fantastic*, and *Fantastic Universe*.

Despite the more than 2,800 drawings and paintings Finlay sold during his career, he often fell upon difficult if not hard times financially. If payment was low in the early days, it didn't seem to improve that much in the two decades that followed.

Virgil Warden Finlay was born on July 23, 1914, in Rochester N.Y. His father, Warden Hugh Finlay, was at one time a successful woodworker, but like so many in the Depression period of the 1930s he found himself hard-pressed to support a family. He died at forty years of age, leaving his widow, Ruby, daughter Jean, and son Virgil.

Some of Finlay's earliest sketches and drawings, dating back to 1930 and 1931, are signed Finlay Jr. or Warden Virgil Finlay.

Although he did some artwork for high school yearbooks, probably his first professionally published illustration was on the dust wrapper for a 1933 book of prize-winning high school poetry. The book, *Saplings*, featured on its front cover a drawing called, "My Mirror's Melody," which shows a young man playing a violin to a girl in a wooded setting. While the signature plainly reads "Virgil Warden Finlay" the caption under it reads "By Warden Virgil Findlay," with the "D" added to his last name. This picture was awarded second prize in the Charles M. Higgins Award for drawing with black ink in the Art Division of the Scholastic Competition of 1933. At that time Finlay was a senior at John Marshall High in Rochester.



1951 illustration for Richard Glaenger's "Golden Atlantis."

## The Author: Finlay's Biggest Fan

Writer/editor Gerry de la Ree is well known as one of the most ardent collector/fans of fantasy and science-fiction art in the world. Beginning his collection of SF and fantasy visuals in the 1930s, Gerry quickly assembled stunning examples of some of the finest styles of pulp phantasmagoria in existence. Today, his collection includes more than 1,000 pieces of wonderment by such artists as Virgil Finlay, Hannes Bok, Lawrence Sterne Stevens, Mel Hunter, Frank Kelly Freas, Mahlon Blaine, Stephen E. Fabian, Jeff Jones, Willy Pogany, Harry Clarke, J. Allen St. John, Edd Cartier, Lynd Ward, Frank Upatel, George Barr, Earl Bergey, Roy Krenkel and J. Watson.

Gerry first "discovered" the intricate imagery of Virgil Finlay during the early thirties. As Finlay's reputation grew during both that decade and the forties (during which time,

Finlay invariably ranked No. 1 in fan polls conducted to determine the most popular artist in the fantasy field), so did Gerry's admiration. In 1947, he bought his first Finlay original at a convention in Philadelphia. It was love at first sight. In 1951, he began writing the artist, purchasing original drawings for \$2 to \$10.

The two became "pen-pals," with their regular letters continuing for the next fourteen years. In 1965, de la Ree finally visited the veteran artist in Finlay's Westbury, New York home. The ailing artist and the long-time fan became fast friends and, during the final years of Finlay's life, relished their mutual interest and love for fantasy artwork.

Following Finlay's death, his loyal fan and friend assembled over 120 original pieces of artwork and published a tribute to the late artist: *The Book Of Virgil Finlay*. It is published in paperback by Flare Books.



While in high school, the small but well-built Finlay excelled in athletics; he dabbled in art, poetry, and reading of such magazines as *Amazing Stories* and *Weird Tales*. He continued to refine his artistic skills after his school days, but it was not until mid-1935 that he made the decision to submit some samples of his work to Farnsworth Wright, then editor of *Weird Tales*.

Until this time, most pulp magazines, including *Weird Tales*, had concentrated on publishing garish covers to lure customers, while most of the interior drawings were on the drab side. Finlay's new approach to fantasy art won favor with Wright, and his first work appeared in the December, 1935 issue.

Between the time Wright purchased Finlay's initial drawings and the time they appeared in print, the editor commissioned Finlay to do twenty-five drawings for Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Wright produced this as a 35-cent paperback. It was a financial flop, although the edition has become a collector's item.

As the 1936 issues of *Weird Tales* rolled off the presses, Finlay's artwork began to draw praises from readers and authors alike. It prompted three of the magazine's top writers, Lovecraft, C.A. Smith, and Seabury Quinn to strike up correspondences with Finlay.

Finlay was now a regular in the pages of *Weird Tales*. In November, 1937, he received a letter from A. Merritt suggesting that he might care to join the staff of *The American Weekly*, a large-sized newspaper supplement edited by Merritt and published by William Randolph Hearst. Naturally, Finlay was already familiar with Merritt's popular fantasies such as *The Ship of Ishtar*, *The Moon Pool*, *Dwellers in the Mirage*, and others.

So Virgil pulled up stakes in Rochester and moved to New York City.

Some of Finlay's most spectacular drawings would appear in *The American Weekly*, but his tenure there was a rocky one. Unaccustomed to meeting the deadlines of a weekly publication, still trying to do work for *Weird Tales*, and getting used to life in the big city almost unhinged him. He went through a series of firings and hirings at the *Weekly*, but he was Merritt's boy and in the long run he did, by his own count, some 845 pieces of art for this publication. During his period as a staffer, prior to World War II, and as a freelancer from 1946 to 1951, he drew everything from the front cover to small spots on inside pages.

When *Famous Fantastic Mysteries*, based in New York, made its debut in 1939, Finlay quickly found another outlet. During the 1939-42 period, science-fiction magazines sprung up like weeds



"Sharane and Klaneth" from A. Merritt's *The Ship of Ishtar*—for the 1949 edition.

and Finlay did work for most of them. The war killed off all but the heartiest of the newcomers.

By the late 1940s, pulp magazines in general were fast disappearing. Some survived as digest-sized publications. As the decade of the 1950s started, new magazines such as *Galaxy*, *If*, *Fantastic*, *Other Worlds*, and *Fantastic Universe* appeared, and Finlay had some new markets.

Finlay married his childhood friend, Beverly Stiles, on November 16, 1938, and they settled into a small apartment in Brooklyn. Virgil entered the Army in June, 1943, and served in the Pacific area before the conflict ended. He spent the first two years in the States. After a brief stay in Hawaii, by which time he was a corporal, he was shipped to Okinawa in April, 1945. He attained the rank of Sgt. (T-4) and saw some action.

While in service he did only two drawings for science-fiction magazines. Both were done while he was in Hawaii. One was used in the October, 1946, issue of *Famous Fantastic Mysteries* with C. L. Moore's story "Daemon", and the other in the Fall, 1946 *Thrilling Wonder* for "Call Him Demon", a Kuttner story printed under his Keith Hammond pseudonym.

In 1948 the Finlays moved from Brooklyn to Levittown on Long Island. Their daughter, Lail, was born the following year. In 1950 they purchased a new home in Westbury. Some 20 years later, Finlay would tell me that this was the wisest investment he ever made.

While not exactly a recluse, Finlay stayed quite close to his Westbury home. He did not attend conventions and mix with his fellow S.F. artists and

authors. He was proud of much of his work, but no doubt discouraged at his seeming inability to gain recognition outside the fantasy field. A dedicated family man, he was often forced to overcome frustrating periods of financial difficulties to make ends meet. He had grown up with the pulp magazines and would no doubt have been fairly content to stay there had not the pulps themselves disappeared, his main source of income going with them.

To family and close friends, Finlay answered to the name of "Chub", with which he had been tagged as a youth. As early as 1933, Finlay sported a moustache; it is present in two of three self-portraits I have in my collection. In later years he wore a full beard.

Finlay's closest friend in the science-fiction field was author Henry Kuttner. But this was in the pre-war days. When Kuttner married C. L. Moore in 1940, Virgil and Beverly were present. After the Kuttners moved to California, Finlay carried on a bulky correspondence with Henry, whose death in 1958 was a blow to the artist and the science-fiction field in general.

Finlay was one of the few magazine illustrators who made a genuine effort to have editors return his originals. Even so, many of the drawings were never returned. Some were retained by the editors, some were given to authors, and still more were donated to the various S.F. conventions as auction material.

Some of the "missing" Finlay originals were uncovered in 1975 by art collector Gene Nigra, who managed to purchase most of the estate of the late Hannes Bok, who had been one of Finlay's "rivals" in the 1940 period at *Weird Tales*. Bok, who had died in 1964, had left a number of his own paintings with a friend. When Nigra went through the mass of material held by Clarence Peacock, he was stunned to find Finlay's originals from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as well as other Finlay drawings that Bok had apparently picked up during his visits to the offices of the magazines years before.

Most of Bok's friends seemed to believe he was disdainful of Finlay's work, but the location of this cache of drawings would seem to indicate otherwise.

During the 1940s, *Famous Fantastic Mysteries* published three portfolios of Finlay's drawings from that magazine. Another portfolio of some of his finest illustrations appeared in 1953.

His first fantasy dust-wrapper was for H. P. Lovecraft's *The Outsider And Others* (1939), the first book published by Arkham House. Because he was so busy at the time, Finlay used a montage of his *Weird Tales* drawings for the jacket. Years later both the book and jacket would command high prices in the used book market.



He illustrated a few books such as *Roads* by Seabury Quinn and *The Ship of Ishtar* by Merritt, but he never made a serious dent in the pocketbook field, which today is both the showcase and highest-paying market for many illustrators.

Early in 1969 Finlay underwent extensive surgery for cancer, but had improved sufficiently by June to attend the wedding of his daughter. He resumed his work for *Astrology*, but during the time remaining to him he found it difficult to meet his deadlines. Although in pain much of the time, he retained his sharp sense of humor. During this period he began selling off many of the original drawings and paintings he had retained over the years.

Late in 1970 he was hospitalized with a liver ailment. He returned home in late December and I recall talking with him on the phone on Christmas day. A planned trip to Long Island to visit him in early January never materialized for me because of car trouble. Finlay suffered a final setback only two weeks later and died on January 18, 1971. When he died of cirrhosis of the liver, an autopsy revealed that the cancer had spread to other organs.

In the months following his death, I printed a portfolio of his previously unpublished drawings. Most of these dated back to his pre-professional days. But one, a fine drawing in Finlay's best style, had been done in 1964 for a proposed edition of J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*. While a fine drawing, author Tolkien nixed the proposed volume because Finlay's interpretation of the story differed from his own.

Later in 1971, Donald Grant of Rhode Island published the first hard-cover book of Finlay's art. Only a third of the book contained drawings, however. There was also a biography of Finlay by Sam Moskowitz and a checklist of the artist's published work.

In 1975 I published the hardcover edition of *The Book of Virgil Finlay*, which contained some 120 drawings from my own collection. The book sold out before publication, and in 1976 Avon Books reprinted it in a paperback edition. Grant did a second book, *Virgil Finlay's Astrology Sketch Book*, which was edited by Mrs. Finlay. Other portfolios, some of them pirated from the magazine pages, have appeared in recent years.

Finlay originals, which once sold for \$10 or \$20, today command prices in the hundreds of dollars. As is so often the case, the artist's work increased in value after his death.

The continued appearance of Finlay books and portfolios has given a new generation of fantasy fans the opportunity to admire and study his work. He is gaining a new following, and deservedly so. ★



One of Finlay's last SF illustrations, done for Brian Aldiss' 1968 *Cryptozoic*.



# STATE OF THE ART

A column by David Gerrold



Every so often, it happens that someone accuses me of having a big ego.

I suppose it's possible that I do. I probably am in no position to make an impartial judgment on the matter; certainly, I no longer try to deny having a big ego—that's a futile exercise, to be sure. The last time I tried to prove I was shy and retiring by citing examples of my humility, nobody believed it—they said I was bragging about how modest I could be.

Now, I don't particularly think that my ego is any bigger than anybody else's—but nobody has yet come up with a valid way of measuring the size of egos. At best, it's a subjective judgment anyway. The last time I attended a party where we all whipped out our egos and compared them, I lost to a fellow who'd just sold the movie rights to his colostomy for \$265,000 and wouldn't stop talking about it.

If someone can devise a standard for the measurement of ego size, I will be glad to submit mine for a thorough scientific testing so we can settle the question of its size in proportion to the rest of me once and for all. Until then, I'm perfectly willing to go along with the majority opinion and agree that I probably do have a very big ego.

Of course, it really doesn't matter whether I have a big ego or not—there are people all over the country, thousands of them perhaps, who've never met me, probably never will, but who are already experts on the private lives of the stars and celebrities of the science-fiction community, who are already convinced that I *do* have a big ego, and they will spend hours telling each other so in great detail.

I suppose that all that attention is flattering, but the fact that anyone can spend any amount of time talking about the various flaws in the personality of another only indicates the paucity of that person's imagination when it comes to choosing a suitable subject for conversation.

The mistake is in assuming that having a big ego is necessarily a bad thing.

When someone accuses the average ordinary person on the street of having a big ego, it is reasonable to assume that the accusation is an epithet. There are two usual responses: "I do not," and "Same to you, fella!"

Both are wrong.

The correct response is, "Why, thank you for noticing. I'm proud of my big ego. It took years of careful nurturing to grow it this big." It's a compliment when someone notices the size of your ego. It's nothing to be ashamed of at all. I don't mind it a bit when someone points it out—I do have a big ego.

And so does everybody else. Some people just aren't embarrassed to admit it.

What's more egotistical than that?

But ego, egoism and egotism are loaded words. We use them as perjoratives. The ideal person, according to lip-service, is modest—

Modest means humble. It also means poor. Modesty is a false virtue—nobody ever got rich or successful by *doubting* that he could do something; he got there by daring to believe that he could. Ten years ago, I dared to believe I could sell a script to my favorite TV show. It was a vanity to believe that I, an untrained hopeful, could do so—until I actually did, then it was the realization of a dream. Egoism—not egotism—is the fuel for a writer's engine. He has to believe that what he is writing is worth selling, worth publishing, and worth reading. He has to believe not only in the worthwhile-ness of his work, but in his ability to do it as well as he can.

Ah, but it is not the theory of egotism that scares the common man—it's the practice of it.

A writer stands up in front of an audience at a convention—he is enthusiastic about the field he loves; he's proud of what he's done in the past and he is excited about the plans for the things he intends to work on in the future—he can't help it; writing a story is *fun*!

Yeah, look—there's also a lot of blood, sweat, tears and starving in garrets—but the reason that writers write is that it's easier than *not writing*; it's because there is a special kind of thrill that happens when you see it all begin to come together on the page in front of you—a feeling that is almost mystic and certainly indescribable to anyone who has not personally experienced it for himself—but there is the moment that occurs when all the hard work and tears are justified in that one immortal moment in which writing is *fun*!

Listen carefully the next time you see a writer in person. You will never hear a writer stand up in front of an audience and say, "I am a good writer." That's bragging—and few writers *really* brag; but you are likely to hear almost every writer say, "I'm really excited about my new book—it's some of my best work." That's not bragging, that's enthusiasm! Isn't it nice to know that a writer is feeling terrific about his work—if he likes what he's doing, then that's a good sign to you, the reader, that you'll probably enjoy it too.

It's that enthusiasm and self-confidence that are most often confused with vanity. I suppose it's hard to tell the difference, especially if you're not a writer—but most of the people who have charged various individual writers with having big egos are the very people who seem to be most insecure about their own—are they projecting something onto convenient targets?

Each of us lives in our own private universe. It revolves around our own lives, and each of us judges the rest of the universe by how it affects *ourselves*.

If there really were a way to determine the ego-ness of an individual, it would probably come as no great surprise to find that writers, actors, directors, and other persons in the arts and

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entertainment industries all have big egos.

Not just big, but *massive*! Colossal! Stupendous! Enormous! Gigantic! Super 70-millimeter, wide-screen, glorious technicolor, three-dimensional egos, with six-channel, Dolby-processed stereophonic Sensurround with additional special effects by John Dykstra, Doug Trumbull, and Laserium.

All writers have big egos—not just the few lucky ones you hear about, but all the ones you don't hear about as well. It's my theory that the more successful a writer is, the bigger the ego he has. And why not? He's earned the right to feel pleased with himself, hasn't he?

So, when some of the more astute readers of this column notice that I have a big ego, well it's no secret to notice the obvious—I never claimed modesty as one of my virtues. As a matter of fact, I suspect modesty to be something of a fault. If you don't let other people know what you are capable of, how are they going to find out? Nobody ever got successful by pretending he couldn't do the job, so I will cheerfully admit that I have a big ego—it's the one thing I can claim to have in common with Robert A. Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, Harlan Ellison, Larry Niven, Ray Bradbury, Gene Roddenberry, Alan Dean Foster, Dorothy Fontana, Theodore Sturgeon, William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Aristotle, Charles Dickens, Edgar Allen Poe, Herman Melville, H. G. Wells and Jules Verne.

To name a few.

Big egos. All of us.

Really. It's an occupational hazard.

My own dictionary defines *ego* as "self," or "the conscious part of the personality." *Egotism* is defined as "self-esteem," and *egoism* is "an ethical doctrine that individual self-interest is a valid end."

So, when I say that writers have big egos, I am not saying that we are lesser human beings, any more than the individual accusation of a big ego should be seen as an epithet.

As a matter of fact, the only difference between a writer and an ordinary mortal is that the writer sits at a typewriter and puts words on paper, and then sells those words to someone who is willing to pay for the privilege of printing them and selling them to other people who are willing to pay for the privilege of reading them. Ordinary mortals have big egos too—it's just that ordinary mortals aren't allowed to admit that they have egos at all, let alone put them on a leash and take them out parading in Central Park every Sunday.

This is one of the reasons (if not *the*) reason why writing (as well as acting, singing, dancing, painting, etc.) is so ap-

pealing to people who want to exercise their egos—it is an opportunity to do so while avoiding the criticism that egocising (a word I just invented) usually brings. It need not be a public egocising—it can be something as little as a poem about Spock that you print in a fanzine, but when you write down anything—*anything at all*—for other people to read, then you are organizing a small piece of the universe in the way that you want to see it run; you are playing at being a god.

A couple of issues ago, William F. Nolan reacted quite strongly to something I had said about the novel, *Logan's Run*, which he co-authored with George Clayton Johnson. I never said the book was bad or even badly written—I only said I hadn't read it because the premise hadn't interested me. Perhaps I phrased that lack of interest a little less tactfully than I should have, and for that I offer Nolan my apology; it was an honest mistake. William F. Nolan is justifiably proud of his book and its success—just as I am proud of my books and my successes. Now I've never met the man—I am told he is a fine human being, altogether a credit to his species, and I would not deliberately want to cause him heedless insult. That's why I regret the hostility of his response; his letter did upset me until I stepped back and realized that whether I had meant to or not, I had insulted his baby, his book, his credential as a writer, and by implication, had insinuated that he was not a good person, only a lesser form of life. But that's not the case. I have respect for *all* other writers, whether I read their books or not, simply because writers are—whether we like it or not—the only people in the world who really understand writers. Like it or not, Nolan and I are brothers in the large family of science-fiction readers and writers. What's good for any writer as an individual tends to be good for all writers as a class. While none of the above changes my opinion on the premise of *Logan's Run*, what has been demonstrated here is just how strongly a writer feels about his own work.

We are all sensitive to criticism of our own work as if it is criticism of ourselves, because in a way, that's exactly what it is—the books come out of our hands. (Yeah, Nolan's swipes at my book, *The Man Who Folded Himself*, hurt—he was hitting back; they were also unfair because the book was a Hugo and Nebula nominee in 1973; but he perceived that I was attacking his credential and was justifiably questioning my right to do so.)

Both of us care about our own books very much; both of us have found our

own audiences. Both of us are proud. If we didn't care about what we were doing, our books wouldn't be worth the audiences' attention.

The reason why writers keep setting themselves impossible challenges is that they have massive egos—demanding to be fed with success. And when one of us achieves one of those seemingly impossible challenges, the result is a landmark effort that rewards everyone who reads it: *The Lord Of The Rings*, for example.

Sometimes, also, a writer may fail in his attempts to solve some of those challenges, but even the failures can be interesting. But a writer has the right to be wrong. A writer doesn't have to be perfect every time out. Every success gives you the right to at least three failures—so you can learn from them. But you have to be totally involved in what you are doing to risk that kind of experimentation and self-discovery; to the outside world, I guess, that looks like egotism.

When someone uses the word egotism as an epithet, what he really means to say is, "you aren't paying enough attention to me." Or, "You aren't considerate enough of the rest of us." But that's not egotism, that's something else, and you don't have to be an egotist to be guilty of it. All you need to do is insulate yourself from the correcting signals that the universe offers you.

Which brings me back to where I started. It doesn't matter what size my ego is, or anyone else's, is—that's not what you're paying for. It is unimportant to you whether the author of a book has fits of depression or loneliness or manic giddiness. It is unimportant whether he is generous or stingy, whether he is thoughtful or rude, moody or stable. The only thing that you need care about is whether the book you are going to read is going to deliver to you your money's worth of entertainment—and that's the only thing that any professional writer has to worry about.

It's egotism: I want you to like my work, so you'll keep buying it—so I can keep eating—I can't make you like me as a person through this column, because you're not really meeting the person, so all I can try for is to write something interesting every time out.

The only thing you need to know from the writer is that he believes in what he's doing; that's a compliment to you. Isn't it a good feeling to know that a writer thinks so highly of his audience that he always wants to be at his best for them?

Shouldn't that make you feel good?

So call me an egotist and I'll thank you for the compliment. ★



# TV UPDATE

## MARTIANS & MAGICIANS TO INVADE TV AIRWAVES



Photo: Richard Todd



© Marvel Comics Group

Late Flash!  
Capt. America has been placed on the CBS Production sked. Left: Author Bradbury.

NBC-TV has announced plans for its fall schedule that include the presentation of what just might be science fiction's finest hour on the tube. Ray Bradbury's classic work of two decades ago, *The Martian Chronicles*, will finally make its way to television after hovering countless years in TV and film producers' offices as an on-again, off-again proposition. The current science-fiction boom has prompted a few television executives to

A pre-production sketch by Tom Wright used for the upcoming telefilm, *Doctor Strange*.



Photo: © CBS

take a second look at SF, and Bradbury is justifiably ebullient that his 27 year old masterpiece is one of the first to leap into the video airwaves. The novel is to be televised in the form of a six part mini-series, scripted by Richard (I Am Legend, The Incredible Shrinking Man, The Legend Of Hell House) Matheson. Although Bradbury acknowledges that there is a genuine interest in science fiction among the networks and the movie companies, he admitted to reporters recently that SF is still one of the most misunderstood genres around. "It's a very special field," he stressed. "We're not accepted by libraries and teachers. Still, there are no truths in our society today that are not science fiction. All around us you can see the impact of science and technology on the world. The H-bomb alone has done more than Jesus Christ ever did or Christianity has ever done. The most destructive force in the history of mankind has, in reality, given us life." Bradbury went on to wonder aloud why television, a technology-based medium, was so slow in recognizing the connection between society and technology and why the networks expressed such a strong distaste for science fiction. "Why don't the networks do it well? Obviously, they don't know how and they're afraid to give science-fiction writers of accomplishment the freedom to do it well. Look at what CBS did to us this season with that thing, *Logan's Run*. It looked like a 1932 version of *Buck Rogers*. You expected to see a little rocket ship with a firecracker up its backside. If you do science fiction half-way, you're in trouble. You must spend money for the right director and the right property." Des-

pite TV-dom's rather flawed outlook concerning science fiction, Bradbury took the time to assure all his fans that *The Martian Chronicles* would be handled in a very atypical fashion. It will be a high quality science-fiction production.

While NBC is busily putting together their Fall *Martian* plans, CBS is activating their army of Marvel superheroes this season. *Spider-Man* is the first comic book character to make the leap to TV-dom, with a five episode series now in progress. The next to appear on the airwaves will *The Incredible Hulk* with a series of twelve episodes ordered by the same network. Scheduled to appear in a special telefilm format this fall are Captain America and Dr. Strange.

And while CBS concentrates on their contemporary superheroes, Norm Prescott at Filmation is devoting his time to the full-length animated exploits of that stalwart hero of yesteryear, *Flash Gordon*. "We're in the initial stages of our TV movie," Prescott explains from his California office. "We're still working on character designs and backgrounds. This week, we started auditioning over 400 actors for the 32 roles in *Flash*. We'll have some of the biggest names in the business." Prescott plans to make *Flash* an atypical TV cartoon, smoothly animated and totally fluid. "We've begun animating pencil tests of about five major scenes," he says. "Then we're going to video tape them so we can have an instant playback set-up. In this way, we can check all the animation before we go to a final version. Since we're going to do this prime time, we're also rotoscoping a lot of action. We're filming live people (and then animating over their actions) to give *Flash* a more natural, human feeling. To give a sense of absolute fluidity." The *Flash Gordon* special is now scheduled for the 1978-79 TV season. ★



# INTERPLANETARY EXCURSIONS, INC.

## PORT OF CALL: THE GOLDEN VEIL AND OTHER SKIES

By JONATHAN EBERHART

Photo: D. Matson, T. Johnson et al./JPL

**Maj. C.X. Ostrow:** Look at the color of that sky!

**Jerry Farman:** But I'll still take blue.

**Maj. Ostrow:** I don't know—I think a man could get used to this, and grow to love it.

Now there's a man after my own heart, finding wonder and perhaps a touch of pleasure in his first sight of a truly alien sky, the opalescent green firmament of Altair IV, otherwise known as MGM's *Forbidden Planet*. (If you've only seen the movie in re-release, it may have been more like magenta, due to the unfortunate fading of the green dye in the film emulsion.) Few Earthlings, I suspect, are aware how important their steadfastly blue sky may be to their sense of home, but when convenient space travel gives them a chance to look up from the surfaces of other worlds, they'll find out!

For the well-traveled crew of the starship *Enterprise*, experience may ease the effect. At least purple, turquoise and burnt-orange skies have seemed to appear in a peacock-like array without producing so much as a heavenward glance. Ground-bound Earthlings, however, while they may praise their multi-hued sunsets or live out their lives under unrelenting urban smogs, would probably share the longings of Rhysling, Robert Heinlein's space-hopping Woody Guthrie, who prayed to the end of his days for a last look at "the fleecy skies . . . of Earth." And you know that, in his mind and heart, they were blue.

For blue skies are rare, at least in this solar system. So rare, in fact, that Earth's may be the only one in our diverse family of planets and moons. (There's just a slim possibility of a second, and it may surprise you.) One of the real surprises of the whole Viking

Io's "Golden Veil"—a vast cloud of sodium atoms stimulated by host-planet Jupiter—was photographed by JPL on Feb. 19, 1977. A white dot representing Io, the planet Jupiter, and an indication of Io's orbit are in proper size and perspective.

Mars mission, for example, was the discovery that the Martian sky is not blue, but a sort of pale pink. The reason is that the Martian atmosphere is simply too thin, with too few molecules of gas to absorb the red portion of the Sun's light and scatter the blue. Instead, almost all of the light-scattering is done by the dust particles hanging in the air and borne on the winds. The dust comes from the surface, and the sky of Mars is, roughly speaking, a washed-out version of the surface color.

Project Viking's scientists had known for years that the air was thin, and they had known about the dust and surface color. But the idea of a blue sky is built in to Earthly explorers—what Carl Sagan calls "geochauvinism." In fact the first color picture ever made on the Martian surface, taken by the Viking 1 lander on July 21, 1976, showed the planet to have a blue sky. The blue raised not a single eyebrow—until the researchers went back to "calibrate" the colors using later photos of a color test chart on the lander's body. The ground color changed a little. The sky color changed a lot.

*Mr. Eberhart is Space Sciences Editor of Science News.*



Photo: NASA/JPL

In our first excursion, last issue, we visited a single small object, an asteroid-sized body temporarily named Kowal—after the astronomer who found it circling the Sun. Come this time on a multibillion-kilometer grand tour of the entire solar system. . . And look to the skies.

Remember, no Earthlings have yet been to these places (although the positive side of "future shock" is that you might be the first to go), and the spacecraft that have visited some of them either carried no color equipment or stayed above the atmosphere looking down rather than taking our sky-watcher's view from below. So: although some of the conclusions are hypotheses rather than answers, there is a growing body of data to support them. Mars clearly showed that there is room for surprises, but it also put the scientists on their toes. So "sky ho!" and we'll try to find a color you like.

Surely the most unusual (at least no one has yet discovered its like) is the Golden Veil of Io, Jupiter's second-nearest (that's important) and third-largest moon, a little larger than Earth's

Left: At first the Viking Lander photos of Mars appeared to have a blue sky. Below: The unearthly truth was revealed in later photos.







own. Without going into great detail (we've got a lot of worlds to cover), the Golden Veil was not even discovered until 1973, and it was late in 1976 before anyone was actually able to take its picture. It is a cloud of sodium, exactly the same yellow-gold color as a sodium-vapor streetlight or the fog-lamps on your car. The sodium atoms are apparently sputtered up from Io's surface by electrically charged particles that are constantly whipping in from Jupiter along the lines of the planet's titanic magnetic field. The result is a far-flung aura, set aglow by the reflected light of the Sun and reaching well beyond the reaches of what one expects from any conventional atmosphere. It is about 3,600 kilometers across and circles some 420,000 km. from the center of Jupiter (the giant planet is more than 140,000 km. in diameter) yet the Golden Veil dwarfs even that gigantic scale of things—recent spectral studies have detected it more than 2 million km. away from its host moon.

The conspicuous portion, of course, extends "only" perhaps 50,000 to 100,000 km. from Io, and you'll have to set your approach trajectory carefully to see it at its best. Brilliant Jupiter, for example, can wash it out—the veil is just as tenuous as Earth's "northern lights"—so you should come in with Jupiter in

your wake somewhere. Put the Sun behind you, too, just as you would when taking a picture outdoors on Earth, so that it can light up the cloud without overexposing your eyes and sensors. Once you've landed on Io (Class III radiation shielding is a must with Jupiter nearby) the same rules apply. An ideal time would be when Io is the focus of an angle of  $90^\circ$  or less between the Sun and Jupiter, while you stand facing away from both bright light-sources. It will be pretty dark, since there is no substantive atmosphere to color the sky in the terrestrial way, but there, floating wraithlike in the darkness, you should see the Golden Veil.

Io is a dangerous place for an unprotected visitor, even beyond the lack of breathable air, but the cause of the danger—the nearness of Jupiter—is also what lets the Veil exist at all. Perhaps another name for it might be "The Electric Sky."

Now let's put a little order in this trip. It is after all a guided tour, and high-specific-impulse drive systems notwithstanding, it seems a waste to go hopping in and out all the time. So let's go all the way into Mercury and then work our way out. (There'd be a better way to do this, taking planetary positions in their orbits into account, but that requires a known departure date.)

In slow descent through the upper atmosphere of Jupiter, this exploratory bathysphere will record the violence below.

Not much local sky at Mercury. The Mariner 10 spacecraft surprised everybody by detecting a bit of an ionosphere, but it's so close to nonexistent that Venus begins to look pretty exciting.

And it is. Standing on the surface (and somehow resisting 90 Earth atmospheres of pressure at about  $875^\circ\text{F}$ .  $468^\circ\text{C}$ ) you can't see the solar disk at all, but at least you can see. That's another surprise. Many scientists assumed that it would be virtually dark, and the Soviet Venera spacecraft carried lights—which they turned out not to need. The sky is probably reddish (the blue wavelengths are simply bent out of shape and devoured by the dense atmosphere), and—betraying yet another misapprehension—you can see the shadows of the rocks. It used to be thought, until the Veneras proved it wrong, that the little available light would be so diffuse that shadows couldn't exist. But in fact, as Dr. Andrew Ingersoll of California Institute of Technology points out, there is "a true up-down asymmetry;" in other words, even the diffuse light shining on the top of a rock is brighter than the same light reflected up from the



ground. Hence, ruddy shadows on a twilight world.

But look at the horizon. You landed on what you thought was a flat plain. Instead, you seem to be standing in a shallow, bowl-like depression. It's the distortion caused by the light-bending efficiency of that super-dense air. (Note: if you're going planet-hopping, you're going to get pretty tired of saying "atmosphere" all the time, so let's take "air" out of the geochauvinist category and apply it to whatever atmosphere surrounds you at the moment.) The bending is so severe that if the light rays could somehow magically avoid being absorbed and scattered at all (but still be refracted), they'd go all the way around the planet. In other words, you could see the back of your head, albeit somewhat squashed. Ingersoll, in fact, says it would work at any pressure level from 8 atmospheres down to the ground. He calls it "the infinite funhouse mirror."

Earth: If you haven't looked up enough to notice your own sky, you're probably not reading this magazine either. You've "done" Mars (as the travel columns say), so it's on out to Jupiter, which, appropriately for its size (it far out-masses all the other planets and moons put together) offers you a choice.

First, of course, you have to get into

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Venus has no horizon—the super-dense atmosphere makes the surface appear to slowly "bend" up and merge with the sky.

the atmosphere enough to have some colored sky above you. Let's assume a few technological breakthroughs and go ballooning, Arthur C. Clarke style. The idea of a landing craft is a joke, since there's probably nothing to land on until you get down to pressures and temperatures resembling the interior of the Sun. Still, bobbing around at, oh, 10 or 20 atmospheres should do the trick.

You can get a reasonable idea of what you'll see just by looking at the photos returned by the Pioneer 10 and 11 spacecraft (and better ones will start arriving late in December from the first of two Voyager probes). Hovering in the famous Great Red Spot—being careful not to get knocked silly by the turbulence—that's probably what your sky will look like: a reddish russet, colored by what various scientists have predicted to be ammonium polysulfide, red phosphorus crystals or perhaps something completely unanticipated. Traversing the planet's bands, belts, whorls and other regions, you're likely to encounter skies of white, brown, yellow, orange, purple and perhaps even some relatively clear areas where there may just be some patches of blue. (The same density-refraction effect applies on Jupiter as on Venus, by the way, and as on Venus it also affects radio waves. Thus if you plan to go really deep in the atmosphere, you should probably have your mothership pick an orbit that will place it near to overhead when you want to talk.)

And for a real spectacular, hang around for an electrical storm. A number of researchers believe that lightning is likely and even common; for an idea of just *how* common, try this: In 1974, acetylene was detected in the Jovian atmosphere. Dr. Akiva Bar-Nun of the Hebrew University in Israel has calculated that to keep up the supply of acetylene (which he believes to be generated electrically, since there is too much hydrogen around to do it thermally) could require about 53,000 Earth-sized lightning bolts every year for every square kilometer of the planet's "surface." (Presumably there could be fewer bolts, but they would be *big ones*!) That works out to about one shot per square kilometer every 10 minutes, so you shouldn't have to hang around too long.

(On about July 1, 1985, by the way, Project Galileo, formerly known as the Jupiter Orbiter and Probe mission, will send probes down into the Jovian atmosphere, equipped with, among other things, a lightning detector. It won't take pictures—those will be confined to the orbiter—but it is designed to collect its data down to at least 10 atmospheres of pressure. At that level, if everything is still working, the parachute will be blown loose to let the probe descend as far as it can in a final, dramatic glory dive.)

Saturn also offers some variety, although probably with the colors some-

(Continued on page 57)







# THE MAGIC OF SPACE:

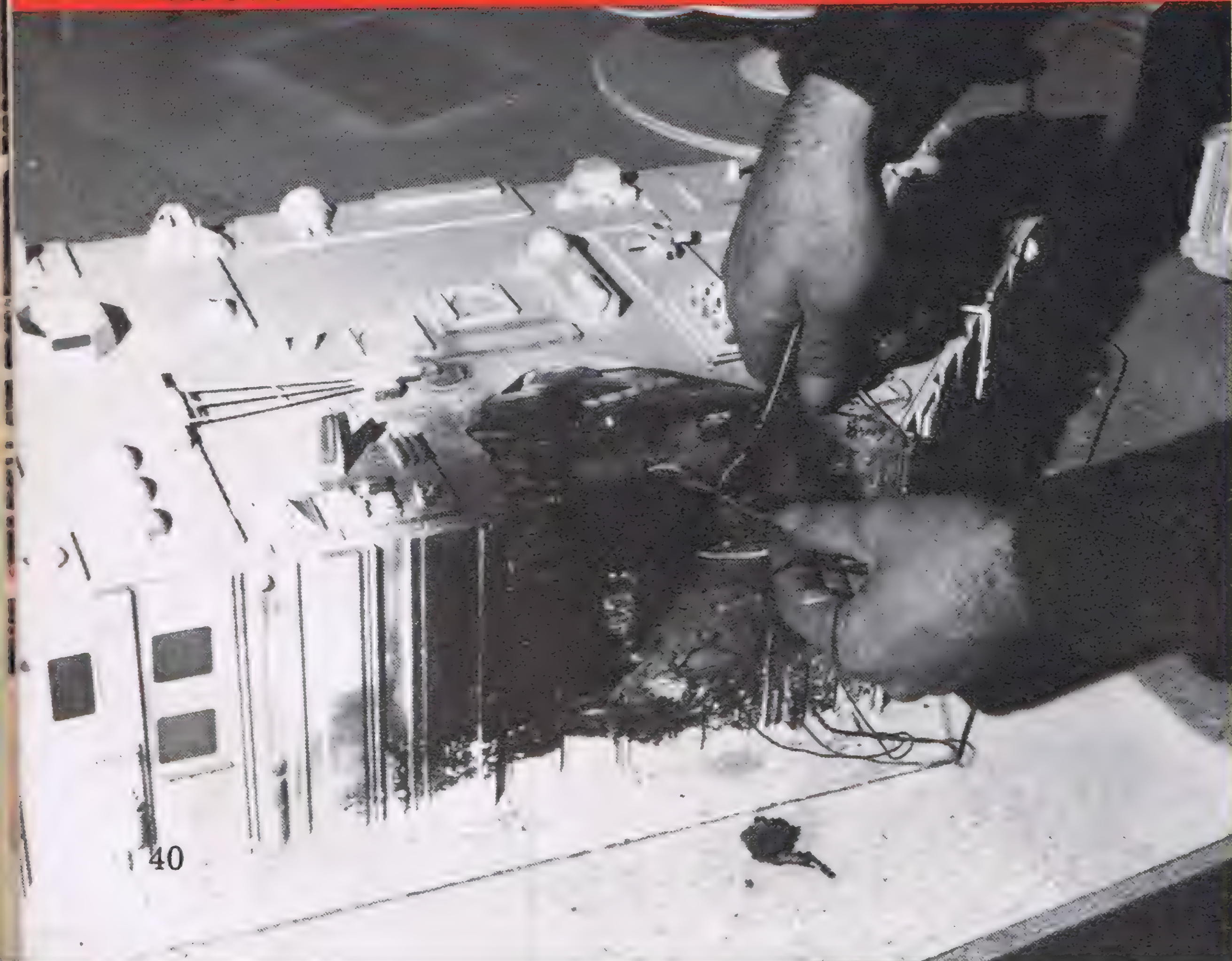
## A Peek at the FX World of 1999

Above: Barbara Bain, Zienia Merton, and Martin Landau wait for final instructions from director Charles Chrichton on the planet set of Terra Nova.

Below: Nick Allder and Brian Johnson set up a scene from the "Breakaway" episode where the Eagles must disperse the nuclear waste. The model is supported by a pipe stand attached to a plug-hole that is located between the main engines.

Below: A closeup look at one of the large Alpha buildings used during scenes that require ground level angles. Although the basic structure is custom-made, much of the detail is created by adding pieces from store bought hobby kits—a process also used by Trumbull and Dykstra.

Photos: © ITC







Above: Filming the spectacular climax to "War Games" as the alien civilization is destroyed. The explosions are the most dangerous effect because a technician may be injured by flying debris. If the scene doesn't work right the first time, it will cost more to shoot it again.

Below: An extremely rare photograph from 1974 of the 12-foot-in-diameter model of Moonbase Alpha on its tabletop base. The high mountains in the background are two separate units that can be placed around the model to create the illusion of depth and distance.



Next issue, *Space: 1999* producer Gerry Anderson answers questions from STARLOG readers in his new monthly column, Gerry Anderson's Space Report.





Illustrations by Jack Rickard



NBC's *Saturday Night Live* produced the most respectful, most accurate and most hilarious satire ever derived from the classic *Star Trek* series. Gene Roddenberry wrote to guest star Elliott Gould: "It was delicious! That is the proper word for it—imaginatively conceived and ably carried out with the kind of loose good humor that an entertaining parody

demands. Hope to soon get started on a *Star Trek* theatrical film and hope to promote a copy of your parody from NBC so it can be shown to all the group to remind us to hang loose and have some fun with what we're doing." The satire has itself become a classic, and STARLOG is pleased to tickle your funny-bone with the text of the script.

# The Last Voyage of the STARSHIP ENTERPRISE

*A Television Script by Michael O'Donoghue*

## CAST AND COSTUMES

### CAPTAIN JAMES T. KIRK

Played by **JOHN BELUSHI**—wears male duty uniform with greenish-gold 03 colored tunic that has a command insignia and captain's stripes, black trousers and boots. Some sort of wig might be necessary.

### MR. SPOCK

Played by **CHEVY CHASE**—wears male duty uniform with blue 17 colored tunic that has sciences insignia and commander's stripes, black trousers and boots. He has pointed ears, characteristic black hair and eyebrows, and a slight greenish-yellow cast to his skin.

### LIEUTENANT UHURA

Played by **DORIS POWELL**—wears female duty uniform with red 10 colored tunic that has a support services insignia and lieutenant's stripes, black panty hose and boots. She wears gold hoop earrings and a distinctive bouffant hair style. Also, she has big tits.

### MR. SULU

Played by **LEO YOSHIMURA**—wears male duty uniform with greenish-gold 03 colored tunic that has a command insignia and lieutenant's stripes, black trousers and boots.

### DOCTOR McCOY

Played by **DANNY AYKROYD**—wears male duty uniform with blue 17 colored tunic with a sciences insignia and lieutenant commander's stripes, black trousers and boots. He is greying slightly.

### CHIEF ENGINEER SCOTT

Played by **DANNY AYKROYD**—filtered voice-over.

### HERB GOODMAN

Played by **ELLIOT GOULD**—wears conservative, drab brown suit circa 1968 with conservative shoes, a colorful but tasteful necktie, light yellow Gant shirt, and either aviator or tortoise-shell glasses.

### CURTIS

Played by **GARRETT MORRIS**—wears khaki slacks, work shoes or sneakers, nondescript shirt and an NBC nylon windbreaker with old 1968 logo on it.

**KIRK, SPOCK and McCOY** all carry No. 2 phasers in their back belts.

(OPEN ON: VTR of 1968 NBC color logo of peacock unfolding)

**ANNCR:** (V.O.) The following program is brought to you in living color on NBC.

(CUT TO: the bridge of the starship Enterprise. Must include captain's chair, helm and navigator stations, main viewing screen, communications station, library computer station, red handrail, banks of lights and screens, and turbo-lift with working elevator doors . . . the time is the twenty-third century)

(SFX: BRIDGE SFX)

(Spock is speaking into intercom . . .)

**SPOCK:** Captain Kirk to the bridge!

The delightful color illustrations for *The Last Voyage of the Starship Enterprise* were done by famed artist Jack Rickard with one hand tied behind his back. Fortunately, for us, it was his left hand. The script is contained in the Avon book, *Saturday Night Live*, edited by Anne Beatts and John Head—a wonderful publication that miraculously captures the flavor of the TV show. Our hats are off to Barry Secunda, producer Lorne Michaels, and writer Michael O'Donoghue, for their help in securing permission to present this classic script. O'Donoghue's zany brilliance in writing is matched only by his strength in battling NBC's red tape machine and clearing the corporate barriers for STARLOG. We are very grateful.

Captain Kirk to the bridge!

(Kirk enters briskly through turbo-lift doors)

(SFX: PNEUMATIC DOOR)

**KIRK:** Yes, Mr. Spock.

**SPOCK:** Sensors are picking up an unidentified vessel, Captain, headed straight toward us.

**KIRK:** Range, Mr. Sulu?

**SULU:** Point zero four light years, sir, and closing fast.

**KIRK:** Lieutenant Uhura, open a hailing frequency.

**UHURA:** I've been trying to raise



them but there's no response sir.

**KIRK:** (pushes button or talks into microphone) This is Captain James T. Kirk of the starship *Enterprise*. Identify yourself. (TO **UHURA**) Put them on the viewscreen, full magnification.

**UHURA:** Aye, aye, sir.

(SFX: VIEWSCREEN SOUNDS)

**KIRK:** Repeat—Identify yourself.

(CUT TO: Mockup of bridgescreen on which is keyed a maroon '68 Chrysler limo "driving" toward the viewer through a field of stars which continually recede, to indicate motion.)

What kind of ship is that, Mr. Spock?

**SPOCK:** Fascinating, Captain. It would appear to be an early gas combustion vehicle, at least two or three hundred years old.

(A strip of paper comes out from console . . .)

**SPOCK:** Here is the readout, Captain. The computer has identified the alien vessel as a 1968 Chrysler Imperial with a tinted windshield and retractable headlights.

**KIRK:** And the little blue and orange numbers?

**SPOCK:** That's called a "California license plate," and it's registered, or was in 1968, to a corporation known as "NBC."

(More paper strip comes out from the console slot . . .)

**SPOCK:** (CONT'D) Wait, here's something more. The computer isn't sure, but it thinks this NBC used to manufacture cookies.

*Enterprise* zipping through space, followed closely by the Chrysler limo)

(MUSIC: STAR TREK THEME)

(SUPER: STAR TREK)

(SUPER: *The Last Voyage of the Starship Enterprise*)

**KIRK:** (V.O.) Captain's Log, Stardate 3615.6. On a routine delivery of medical supplies to Earth Colony 9, we are being chased through space by an automobile three centuries old, owned by a company that manufactured cookies. It would all seem silly if it weren't for this feeling of dread that haunts me, a sense of impending doom.

(MUSIC: OUT)

(CUT TO: BRIDGE . . .)

(SFX: BRIDGE SOUNDS)

**SULU:** They're right behind us, Captain.

**KIRK:** Let's lose them, Mr. Sulu. Prepare for evasive action. Helm hard to port!

(They lurch to right as camera tilts)

Hard to starboard!

(They lurch to left as camera tilts)

Hard to port!

(They lurch to right as camera tilts)

**SPOCK:** Frankly, Captain, I'm exhausted.

**KIRK:** Me, too. Stabilize, Mr. Sulu.

(CAMERA LEVELS)

**SULU:** Look, Captain!

(CUT TO: Model of Chrysler limo much closer than before . . .)

It's no use. We can't shake them.

**KIRK:** Then we'll give them a fight they won't forget. (Into intercom, which makes for some metallic echo) All hands! Man your battle stations!

(SFX: WHOOPING ALARM)

This is not a drill! Red alert! Man your battle stations! Red alert!

**SPOCK:** But, Captain—

**KIRK:** (metallic echo lost) Lock phasers on target, Mr. Sulu.

**SULU:** Phasers locked on target, sir.

**SPOCK:** But, Captain, you can't—

**KIRK:** Stand by to fire.

**SULU:** Phasers standing by, sir.

**SPOCK:** But, Captain, we don't know who the aliens are or what they want. To kill them without warning would be highly illogical.

**KIRK:** Fact—their intentions are unknown. Fact—I am responsible for the lives of 430 crewmen. And, fact—I can't afford to take any chances. (TO **SULU**) Fire main phasers! (PAUSE WHEN NOTHING HAPPENS) I said, "Fire main phasers!"

**SULU:** (frantically hitting buttons) I'm trying, sir. Nothing is happening.

**KIRK:** Arm and lock photon torpedoes, Mr. Sulu.

**SULU:** They're not working either, Captain.

**KIRK:** Deflectors up.

**SULU:** Captain, the helm does not respond. The controls are dead.

**SPOCK:** We're slowing down, Captain. We're stopping.

(The lights dim and flicker a bit in



**KIRK:** (TO **SPOCK**) Run it through the computer. Find out what those little numbers mean. I want answers.

**SPOCK:** (TO COMPUTER) Process visual feed. Analyze and reply.

**KIRK:** I have a hunch, Mr. Spock, that we are about to face a menace more terrifying than the flying parasites of Ingraham B; more insidious than the sand-bats of Manark 4; more blood-thirsty than the vampire clouds of Argus 10. I have a hunch that "thing" out there is deadlier than the Romulans, the Klingons, and the Gorns, all rolled into one.

**KIRK:** Could that (points at the screen) be some sort of illusion, Mr. Spock?

**SPOCK:** It's no illusion, Captain. Scanner readings indicate two life forms inside that craft.

**KIRK:** Mr. Sulu, increase speed to warp factor eight.

**SULU:** But, sir, that's only for the most extreme emergencies. The ship can't take it.

**KIRK:** You heard my order, Mr. Sulu.

**SULU:** Aye, aye, sir.

(CUT TO: Model shots of starship





bridge . . .)

**KIRK:** *(pressing button or talking into mike)*

Bridge to Engine Room, acknowledge.

**SCOTTY:** *(FILTERED V.O.)* Scotty here, Captain.

**KIRK:** What in blazes is going on, Scotty?

**SCOTTY:** *(FILTERED V.O.)* I dinna know, Captain. We're losing power and I don't know why.

**KIRK:** Well, do something, man. Go to manual override. Cut in auxiliary systems.

**SCOTTY:** *(FILTERED V.O.)* Saints preserve us, Captain, but even the emergency systems are out.

**KIRK:** Well, fix it, Scotty. I don't care how, but fix it. The lives of 430 crewmen hang in the balance. Kirk out.

**SPOCK:** Life support systems are still operative, Captain.

**KIRK:** But for how long, Mr. Spock, for how long? Lieutenant Uhura, inform Starfleet Command of our situation.

**UHURA:** All communications are dead, Captain.

*(SFX: PNEUMATIC DOOR)*

*(From turbo-lift, McCoy bursts into the room . . .)*

**McCOY:** Jim, Jim, I—I . . . Jim—

**KIRK:** Great god, man, spit it out.

**McCOY:** The aliens have boarded us, Jim. And they're headed this way.

**KIRK:** But how, Bones? How did they get on board? Did they beam on? Did they suddenly materialize?

**McCOY:** No, they just sort of stepped out from behind the curtains.

**SPOCK:** Describe them, Doctor.

**McCOY:** There's two of them. Biped, humanoid in appearance. Their clothing is drab except for a bright piece of cloth worn around the neck of the leader.

**SPOCK:** Was there anything else odd about their clothing?

**McCOY:** I'm a doctor, not a tailor, dammit! Wait, there was one other thing about them that seemed a bit strange. They spoke English! Quick, Jim, I hear them coming up the turbo-lift! They'll be here in seconds!

**KIRK:** We'll be ready for them, Doctor.

*(Kirk, Spock, and McCoy quickly whip out their phasers and train them on the turbo-lift doors)*

*(The doors open and close to admit Herb Goodman and Curtis . . .)*

Welcome aboard the starship *Enterprise*. I'm Captain James T. Kirk, representing the United Federation of Planets.

**GOODMAN:** *(about to glad-hand Kirk)* Hi, I'm Herb Goodman, head of programming for the network.

**KIRK:** Stand back. I won't hesitate to shoot.

*(Goodman sort of ignores him and addresses the group . . .)*

**GOODMAN:** Can I have your attention? *(TO CURTIS)* Curtis, you want to turn off those sound effects?

**CURTIS:** Sure thing.

*(Exits off-camera, not into turbo-lift)*

**GOODMAN:** *(Addressing group again)* Everyone, please, can I have your attention? I have an announcement to make.

*(SFX: BRIDGE SOUND EFFECTS GRIND TO SILENCE LIKE A RECORD SLOWING DOWN AND STOPPING)*

*(At the same time, the blinking lights on the panels fade and go out . . .)*

Due to low Neilsens, we at NBC have decided to cancel "Star Trek."

**KIRK:** *(TO SPOCK AND McCOY)* Fire at my command.

**GOODMAN:** On your way out, stop by the cashier's office and pick up your checks.

**KIRK:** Set phasers on "stun." Fire.

*(They set phasers on stun to fire at Goodman, but nothing happens)*

**McCOY:** They're not firing, Jim.

**KIRK:** *(CASUALLY)* Try "kill."

*(They set phasers on "kill" and again try to shoot Goodman, but nothing happens . . .)*

**McCOY:** Nope, still nothing.

**GOODMAN:** *(to the three of them about phasers)* You'll make sure the property department gets those things back, won't you, fellows?

**SPOCK:** Most peculiar, Captain. I can only conclude that they possess some sort of weapons deactivator, in which case, I shall merely render him unconscious with my famous Vulcan nerve pinch.

**GOODMAN:** Of course, if it was up to me you could keep them—as souvenirs, give 'em to your kids, whatever. But, you see, they're planning to market a complete line of "Trekie" merchandise, and I have to send these to Taiwan to be copied.

*(As he speaks, Spock approaches him and attempts to knock him out with the Vulcan nerve pinch. It has no effect whatsoever and Spock does a disbelief take on his hand . . .)*

*(Spock tries nerve pinch a second time, and Goodman thinks he's admiring his suit . . .)*

Isn't that fabric something? You just can't buy material like this in the States. No way! But I was lucky enough to find this great little tailor who flies in from London four times a year—

*(Spock, nonplussed, turns to walk away)*

Oh, Nimoy, we'll need these ears back too, I'm afraid.

*(He pulls off the tips of Spock's ears and pockets them)*

**McCOY:** *(TO GOODMAN)* For God's sake, man, we're on a five-year mission to explore space, the final frontier, and dammit, we've only been out three years!

**GOODMAN:** Sorry, it's those Neilsens. If it was up to me, of course . . .



**KIRK:** What are these "Neilsens" that the alien keeps mentioning, Mr. Spock?

**SPOCK:** If I remember my history correctly, Captain, Neilsens were a primitive system of estimating television viewers once used in the mid-twentieth century.

**McCOY:** If Man were meant to fly, he'd have better ratings, is that what you're saying, Mr. Goodbody, whatever your name is? *(TO SULU AND UHURA)* Come on, George, Nichelle, let's go tie one on.

**UHURA:** I'm with you, Kelley.

**SULU:** Maybe I'll just go home.

**KIRK:** *(TO McCOY)* Belay that kind of talk, Doctor McCoy.

**McCOY:** *(TO KIRK)* Forget it, Bill. We lost. It's over. *(TO SPOCK)* Are you coming, Leonard?

*(Spock tries Vulcan nerve pinch on McCoy)*

**McCOY:** *(Pushing him aside)* Knock it off, you joker!

*(McCoy, Uhura, and Sulu exit. Spock starts to exit . . .)*

**KIRK:** *(a bit desperate now)* Wait, Mr. Spock. We have yet to try the Vulcan mind meld, where you actually enter the alien's brain, merge with his intelligence, and read his thoughts.

**SPOCK:** I entered Mr. Goodman's mind while you were talking to Dr. McCoy, Captain.

*(Curtis enters here or a little before, not really noticed, and starts to pry apart the set with a crowbar . . .)*

It was all . . . all dark and empty in there. And . . . and there were little mice in the corners and spiders had spun this web—

**KIRK:** *(grabbing him)* Spock!

**SPOCK:** I kept bumping my head on the ceiling, and once—

**KIRK:** *(shaking him)* Snap out of it, Spock!

**SPOCK:** *(with a shudder)* It's okay, Captain. I'm all right now.

**GOODMAN:** What do you think, Curtis? Any chance we can sell this junk to "Lost in Space"?

*(Curtis has pried a section of the set apart and is turning it around . . .)*

**CURTIS:** Well, it comes apart.

**KIRK:** *(TO CURTIS)* Hey, get away from there!

*(Curtis does not take him seriously, and throws him a mocking salute . . .)*

**CURTIS:** Right on, Buck Rogers! Is that an order?

**KIRK:** No, it can't end like this. I won't let it! This is *my* ship! I give the orders here! I give the commands! I am responsible for the lives of 430 crewmen, and I'm not going to let them down! There's got to be a way out! *(Pounds the panel in frustration)*

**CURTIS:** Let's go boys!

*(Enter 5 or 6 NBC stagehands who start taking set apart.)*

**SPOCK:** You are becoming quite emotional, Captain. Needless to say, my trained Vulcan mind finds such open displays of emotion distasteful. Emotion, you see, interferes with logic, and it is only by dealing with problems in a logical, scientific fashion that we can arrive at valid solutions. Now, with regard to the alien takeover of the *Enterprise*, I suggest that we seek some new alternative, based upon exact computer analysis, of course, and taking into consideration elements of—*(suddenly breaks down into sobbing wacko)* Oh, God! I don't believe it! We're cancelled! How could they do this? Everybody I know loves the show! I have a contract! What about my contract! I want my ears back! *(etc. . . .)*

**GOODMAN:** *(Leading Spock off)* Curtis, can you give me a hand here?

**CURTIS:** I have a couple of Valium in my tool box. Maybe that'll help.

*(Goodman and Curtis help Spock off the set . . .)*

**KIRK:** So it's just me, is it? Well, I've been in tougher spots. Surrender? No way. I'd rather go down with the ship.

**GOODMAN:** *(exiting)* Oh, Shatner, your agent called you. Something about a margarine commercial. He said he'd call back.

*(Kirk is left alone. Tired, defeated, he sinks into his command chair and punches the button to make his final entry . . .)*

**KIRK:** Captain's log, final entry. We have tried to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new civilizations, to boldly go where no man has gone before. And except for one television network, we have found intelligent life everywhere in the galaxy. *(He gives the Vulcan salute)* Live long and prosper. *(Kirk closes his fingers)* Promise. Captain James T. Kirk, SC 937-0176 CEC.

*(Pull back to show him alone in what is now obviously a set in a TV studio, with some of set broken up and one piece turned around so one can read "Star Trek Bridge #4" crudely painted on back. Continue pulling back to show NBC cameras—booms, technicians)* *(Slow fade . . .)* ★





## Golden Veil

(Continued from page 39)

what less intense. It does, however, provide the additional exciting spectacle of the rings. You'll find they cast quite a shadow on the planet—you can sometimes see it from Earth—yet you can see the sun through them. It would be a terrible place to run out of film.

Saturn's huge moon Titan, fully the size of Mercury, promises yet another eyeful as you look up from the surface (which could—and probably will—be the subject of a whole column of its own). Two significant effects are probably at work here, points out Dr. James Pollack of NASA's Ames Research Center in California: particles or condensates (inferred from polarization measurements) absorb much of the blue light, while large quantities of methane absorb red. The resulting sky would be somewhere from yellow to orange, casting a demonic light on the wonders below (patience, patience).

Uranus and Neptune probably have a greenish cast, due in large measure to their being cold enough for the formation of a layer of red-absorbing methane clouds. You may also have to go pretty deep to see them from beneath, since, suggests Ingersoll, the cold will place the clouds at relatively low altitudes, leaving the clear stuff on top.

Some researchers believe that Uranus and Neptune are also in the region where many comets form. That far from the Sun's warmth they would not look very comet-like, since there would be so little heat to drive off the dust and gases responsible for their fuzzy-headed appearance. But what if you rode one in as it neared the Sun? Looking back along your path of approach, you might see two distinct phenomena, points out Dr. Fred Whipple, recently retired director of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory in Cambridge, Mass. The long, slightly bluish "ion tail" would stretch straight out behind you, formed by ions carried away from the comet nucleus by the magnetic field of the solar wind. And curving off to the side (from the physical pressure of the sun's light) would be a white—perhaps vaguely pinkish—dust tail.

Someone in this party must be wondering by now if there isn't *some* object out there with a plain old geochauvinistic Earth-type blue sky. Well, this is *exceedingly* iffy, but would you believe possibly Pluto? It's so far away, more than seven times the distance to Jupiter, that almost nothing is known about it. But in 1974, Dr. Michael Hart, then with the Yale Observatories, reported that the planet's reflectivity at different wavelengths is compatible with an atmospheric pressure as high as Earth's at the surface. Given the cold and the

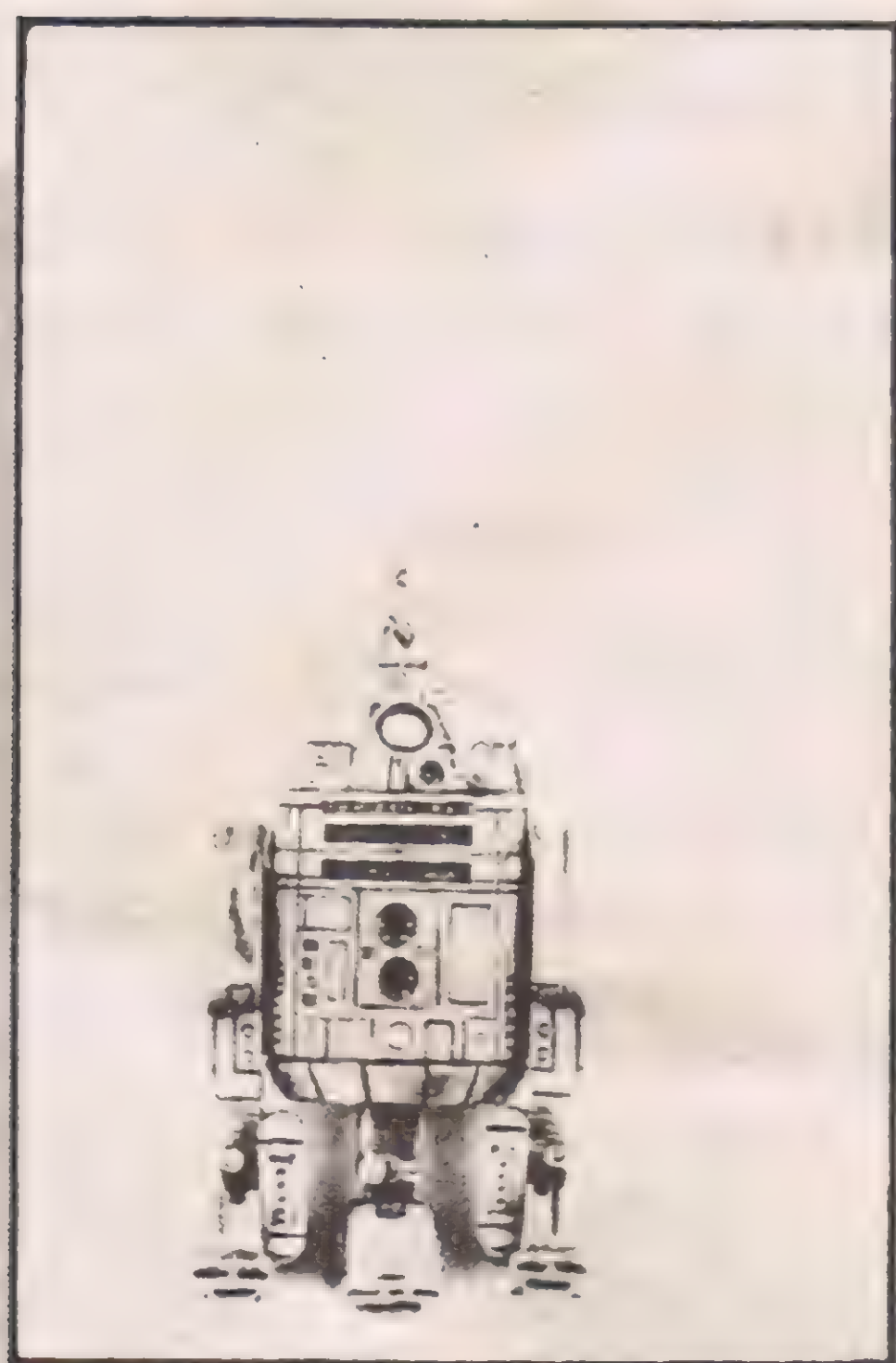
small size of Pluto, he calculated, the only gas which would neither condense nor escape is—ahem—neon. No, it's not glowing like a neon lamp. The point is that a substantial atmosphere of neon, just like one of nitrogen and oxygen, could give you a blue sky, assuming of course that dust particles and other such stuff aren't reddening the picture. Still it's very speculative, as I said, so why don't we leave Pluto for another time?

But in closing, let me tell you my favorite interplanetary blue-sky story. Remember the pink sky of Mars? There *is a little* blue there, right next to the Sun (for diffraction reasons), but the best time to see it is right after sunset, when the horizon is there to keep you from burning out your eyeballs. Now there is a considerable amount of evidence—*isotope ratios and suchlike*—to suggest that the Martian atmosphere used to be a lot thicker in the ancient past of a few billion years ago. If it was thick enough, in fact, just maybe the ancient sky of Mars used to be blue. I like to feel that every day, during the few moments of sunset, the planet is provided a fleeting reminder of the way it used to be. Imagine a long-lived former resident of Mars, returning to sadly experience the pallid salmon sky that his once-friendly firmament has become—and then, as he prepares to depart in sorrow for his present homeworld, then . . . the Sun goes down. ★

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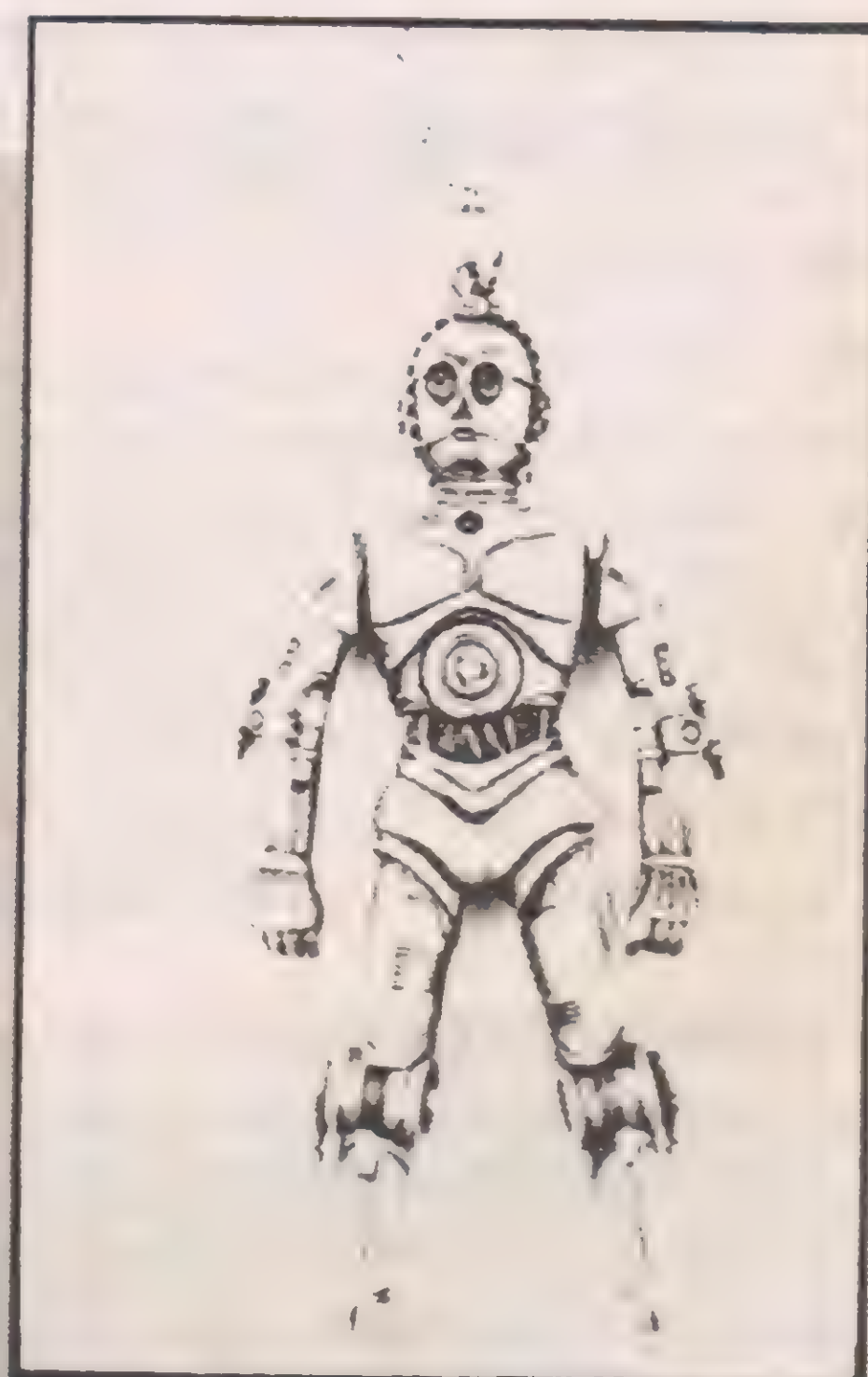
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# STAR TREK REPORT

A Fan News Column by Susan Sackett



**STARDATE: 999999.9**—Paramount Galactic Studios today announced that the centuries-awaited Star Trek holographic picture will begin production in April. Speaking from his studio office, Gene Roddenberry VIII, great-great-great-great-great grandson of the creator of Star Trek said: "We've had some problems, but it looks like this time the Studio has worked everything out, and we will have the descendants of nearly all the original cast." Trek will film on location throughout the galaxy and will feature celebrity aliens from Gamma Delta IV, Omicron Ceti and Vulcan in cameo appearances.

Actually, we should be in production a lot sooner than that. As of this writing (January), we are hoping to begin filming in late April or early May, with release of the *Star Trek* movie in spring or summer of 1979. The remaining few months we have before cameras begin to roll will give us needed time to work on:

**THE SCRIPT:** Gene Roddenberry is just completing final work on the new script, which will take full advantage of the broader opportunities afforded by the wide screen. Particularly exciting, as a result of the decision to make a major motion picture, are the greater possibilities for spectacular visuals and special effects.

**SPECIAL EFFECTS:** We have just signed Robert Abel and Associates to do the *Star Trek* special effects. They have an excellent staff of animators and special effects personnel, including Bob Abel's associate, Con Pederson, who created the special effects for *2001: A Space Odyssey* along with Doug Trumbull. Abel's team of experts was responsible for the brilliant Seven-Up and Levi's commercials. At their facilities, located less than a mile from the Paramount lot, they are presently installing special effects equipment, including the latest computerized camera systems. We believe that Robert Abel and Associates have shown a sense of taste and crea-

tivity which will lend itself well to our movie. Gene is working closely with them on his final draft of the script, conferring with Abel as special effects are written into various scenes.

**PUBLICITY:** We have just hired John Rothwell as unit publicist. He will be handling all requests from the media for *Star Trek* information, interviews, pictures, etc. John recently completed work on *F.I.S.T.* with Sylvester Stallone, and he also did special work on *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind* and *The Deep*. Prior to those assignments, he was with MGM for many years, and worked with Gene Roddenberry on *The Lieutenant*. Incidentally, the *Star Trek* office is always interested in seeing any articles about the movie or even the television reruns which may appear in your local papers. If you are a fan who has wanted to make some contribution to *Star Trek II*, here is your opportunity. If you spot an interesting article about *Star Trek* in your hometown newspaper or other publication, we would greatly appreciate receiving these for our scrapbooks. Please send any clippings to John Rothwell, c/o Paramount Pictures, *Star Trek* Office, 5451 Marathon St., Hollywood, CA 90038.

**FILM TESTS:** Cinematographer Bruce Logan has just completed tests of various types of film to determine which process will best be utilized in *Star Trek II*. The *Enterprise* Rec Room set on Stage 10 was dressed in brilliantly colored futuristic furnishings so that the same scene could be tested with four different formats—Vistavision; 65mm; 35mm anamorphic, and 35mm flat. Film is now being processed and reviewed before a final film size will be determined. Bruce also did a number of tests on the Engine Room to check lighting, and seeing the actual Engine Room on film in dailies gave an indication of just how exciting the whole movie will be!

**SETS:** Construction is continuing on Stage 9, although the frantic pace has eased off now that we've been given extra time. Most of the work is still centered around the bridge consoles as technicians continue the intricate wiring

processes. Intercom systems were recently installed in the *Enterprise* corridors, and panels and consoles are being added to the Engine Room and Transporter Room. Additional sets will be built on completion of the final script, and we have begun scouting locations for some of the exterior shots.

**MAILBAG:** STARLOG readers continue to pose interesting questions. Quentin Iorio of Bronxville, New York writes: "I would like to know if Gene L. Coon, the producer of *Star Trek* for its first two seasons, will return for the new *Star Trek*. Also, if Joseph Pevny and Marc Daniels, two of the show's best directors, will return." Unfortunately, the very talented Mr. Coon passed away a few years ago. The only director we've signed is Robert Collins, who will direct the motion picture. We hope that the television series becomes reality after the motion picture's success—we have all of our scripts and/or stories—and that we can utilize the talents of some of the original *Star Trek* television directors.

STARLOG reader Elsa de Vera of Alexandria, Virginia asks: "Has anyone mentioned that a 23-year-old Vulcan would be the equivalent of a 12-year-old human? The approximate ratio of age and life span between Vulcan and human is 2:1, and this predicates the same ratio for physical development and social adaptation . . ." Perhaps this concept was developed in fan literature, but it was not a part of any *Star Trek* script. In fact, in the animated episode of "Yesteryear" by D. C. Fontana, Spock asks the Time Keeper to set coordinates to Vulcan, thirty years ago—at the time he was a boy of seven. Therefore, Mr. Spock was admitting to being 37 years of age. He was hardly the equivalent of an 18-year-old, nor will our young Vulcan science officer Xon have less than the maturity of a young man of 23. More likely, Vulcans age well!

We enjoy receiving your comments. Please address letters and questions to: STARLOG, Attention: Susan Sackett, 475 Park Ave. South, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10016. ★



# FUTURE CONVENTIONS

Here is the latest information on the upcoming conventions. **Star Trek** cons are denoted with (ST), **science-fiction** cons with (SF). Other cons are labeled appropriately. As always, guests and features for most conventions are subject to last minute changes—for final details check with the person or organization listed. To speed communications, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. **Conventioneers, Please Note:** To insure that your con is listed, please send pertinent information to STARLOG no later than **10 weeks** prior to the event.

**WAUCON (SF)**  
Waukegan, IL April 21-23, 1978

Waucon  
P.O. Box 613  
Waukegan, IL 60085

**PITTCON (Comics)**  
Pittsburgh, PA April 28-30, 1978

Ben Pondexter  
827 Anaheim St.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

**CLASSICON (Pulp)**  
Ann Arbor, MI May 19-21, 1978

Classicon  
c/o Michael Conran  
1905 Martindale SW  
Wyoming, MI 49509

**CREATION COMIC CONVENTION II**  
New York, NY May 19-21, 1978

Creation Comic Con  
c/o Gary Berman  
197-50F Peck Avenue  
Flushing, NY 11365

**PHANTASMICON 78 (SF & SI)**  
Los Angeles, CA May 26-29, 1978

Two Worlds Enterprises  
439 W. La Cienega Blvd.  
Suite 104

Los Angeles, CA 90048

**THE 1978 DEEP SOUTH SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION**

Atlanta, GA June 2, 3, 4, 1978

Heritage Press, Inc.  
Ginger Kaderabek  
P.O. Box 721

Forest Park, GA 30050

**UNICON IV (SF)**  
Silver Springs, MD July 7-9, 1978

Unicon  
P.O. Box 263  
College Park, MD 20740

**VEGA CON '78 (SF)**  
Las Vegas, NV June 16-18, 1978

4689 Sandhill Road  
Las Vegas, NV 89121

**SPACE: 1999 CONVENTION '78**  
Columbus, OH July 28-30, 1978

National Save: 1999 Alliance  
P.O. Box 21085  
Columbus, OH 43220

**THE ANDROMEDA CONVENTION (SF)**  
Arlington, TX July 28-30, 1978

The Andromeda Convention  
1905 Lanewood Dr.  
Ft. Worth, TX 76112

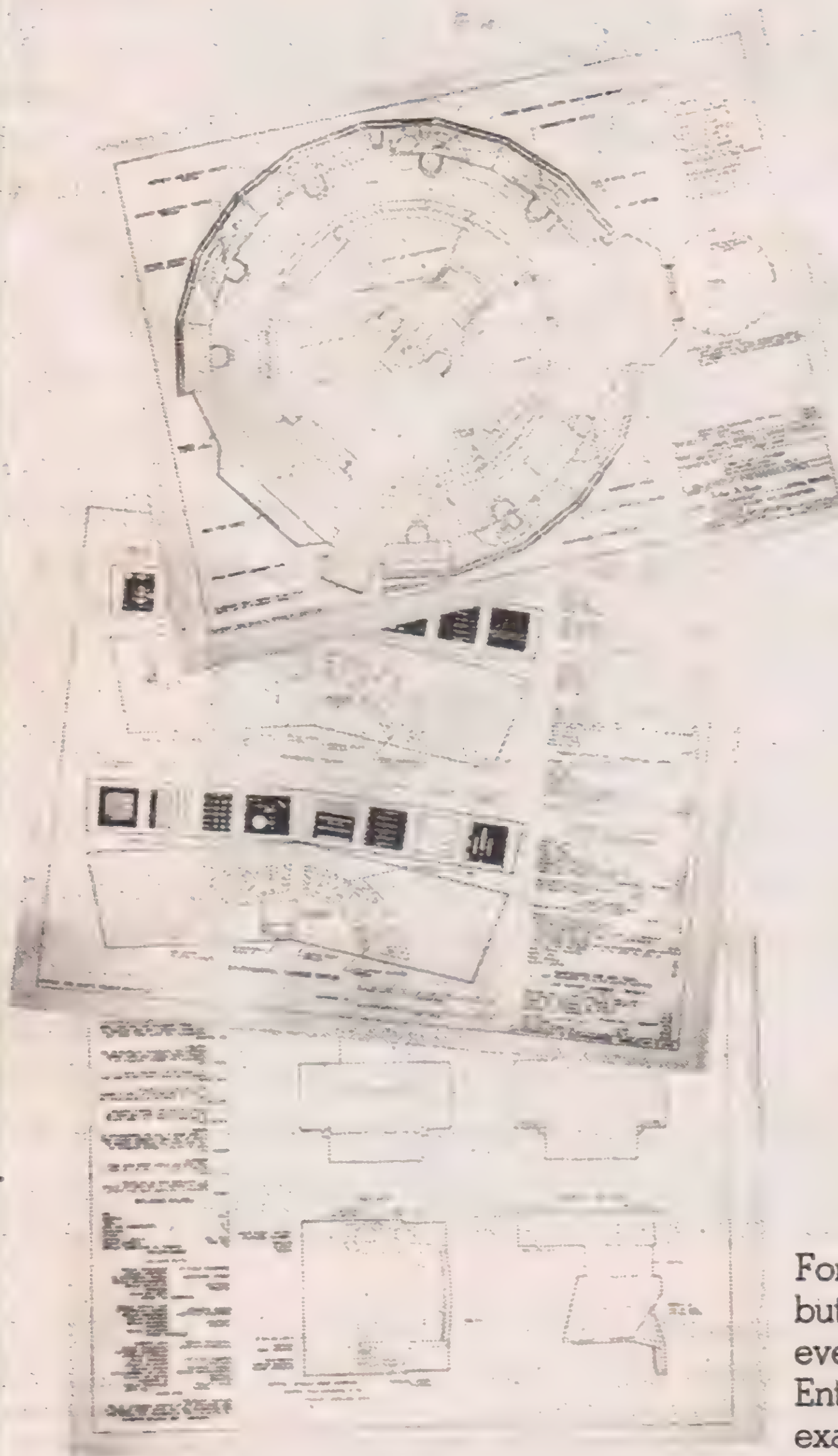
**AUGUST PARTY FOUR (ST)**  
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College Park, MD 20740

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# SCIENCE-FICTION SOUNDTRACKS

By KERRY O'QUINN

*When Worlds Collide* was first shown theatrically in 1951, and many a science-fiction fan haunted the local record shop waiting for the appearance of the soundtrack album. It never appeared. The same story was repeated with the release of *Forbidden Planet* in 1956. No album. Even into the 60s when *Star Trek* became the most popular space drama on TV and fans begged for a record of the music—no dice!

In fact, during the “golden era” of the 50s, to my knowledge, only *one* SF music score was briefly released as a record: *Destination Moon*. For decades SF fans have been ignored by record companies, and the fantastic music of hundreds of movies and TV shows has gone unrecorded—and in many cases has been permanently lost through neglect and careless studio housecleanings.

This last year, however, the tune changed. John Williams' *Star Wars*

score was released in an unprecedented 2-record soundtrack package and was subsequently recorded in dozens of other styles (everything from disco to synthesizer), climaxed by the spectacular new Zubin Mehta suite on London Records. There have been numerous concerts of the *Star Wars* music performed by symphony orchestras, jazz groups and rock bands. The melodies have been used with TV sports events, ballets, fashion shows—and even as elevator Muzak. (The only thing that *hasn't* been done is to create a popular tune by writing lyrics to “Princess Leia's Theme.”)

The *Close Encounters* soundtrack album also received prestige treatment, including a 2-pocket album with one standard LP plus a 7" LP. Suddenly, soundtrack music from science-fiction movies has not only become respectable—it has become a major part of the recording industry. From now on, hope-

fully, the SF music fan will find a fair share of albums in stores—at least as many as the scores from, say, Westerns and adventures.

But what of those passed-over scores from the last 35 years? Well, 1977 also saw the premiere of STARLOG Records with the Original Soundtrack Score to *Rocketship X-M*, a 1950 movie composed by Ferde Grofe. It is the purpose of STARLOG Records to preserve and make available the beautiful music from science-fiction movies and TV shows of the past—music which otherwise might be forever lost.

We invite your help. We would like those of you who are seriously interested in obtaining soundtracks to give us your requests and favorites. The ballot is provided for convenience, but we will be equally happy to receive a post card list. Then watch these pages for the announcement of several new record releases within the next few months. ★

Please help STARLOG RECORDS determine which **previously unrecorded** movie & TV soundtrack scores you would like to see released as records in the future. Check your five (5) favorite movie scores (*not necessarily your favorite movies*) and your three favorite TV themes.

## STARLOG RECORDS BALLOT

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New York, NY 10016

NOTE: This ballot does not obligate you in any way whatsoever.  
You need not sign your name nor your address.

NOTE: If you don't want to cut this page, send your list of movie & TV soundtrack selections on another piece of paper.

### MOVIES: (check 5) Title & Composer:

- ☐ *This Island Earth*—Herman Stein
- ☐ *War Of The Worlds*—Leith Stevens
- ☐ *Journey To The Far Side Of The Sun*—Barry Gray
- ☐ *Invasion Of The Body Snatchers*—Carmen Dragon
- ☐ *Invaders From Mars*—Raoul Kraushaar
- ☐ *Flight To Mars*—Marlin Skiles
- ☐ *The Day The Earth Stood Still*—Bernard Herrmann
- ☐ *Day Of The Triffids*—Ron Goodwin
- ☐ *Cat Women Of The Moon*—Elmer Bernstein
- ☐ *When Worlds Collide*—Leith Stevens
- ☐ *Village Of The Damned*—Ron Goodwin
- ☐ *Queen Of Outer Space*—Marlin Skiles
- ☐ *The Amazing Colossal Man*—Albert Glasser
- ☐ *Futureworld*—Fred Karlin
- ☐ *Panic In Year Zero!*—Les Baxter
- ☐ *Squirm*—Robert Prince
- ☐ *Invasion U.S.A.*—Albert Glasser
- ☐ *The Invisible Boy*—Les Baxter
- ☐ *The Power*—Miklos Rosza
- ☐ *Seconds*—Jerry Goldsmith
- ☐ *The Satan Bug*—Jerry Goldsmith
- ☐ *Fantastic Voyage*—Leonard Rosenman
- ☐ *Riders To The Stars*—Harry Suckman
- ☐ *The Incredible Shrinking Man*—Joseph Gershenson
- ☐ *The Illustrated Man*—Jerry Goldsmith
- ☐ *Them!*—Bronislaw Kaper
- ☐ *Damnation Alley*—Jerry Goldsmith

### TV: (check 3) Title & Composer:

- ☐ *Space: 1999 (Year 2)*—Derek Wadsworth
- ☐ *Man From Atlantis*—Fred Karlin
- ☐ *The Outer Limits*—Frontiere/Lubin
- ☐ *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea*—Paul Sawtell
- ☐ *Star Trek*—Courage/Roddenberry
- ☐ *Logan's Run*—Lawrence Rosenthal
- ☐ *UFO*—Barry Gray
- ☐ *Fantastic Journey*—Robert Prince
- ☐ *Six Million Dollar Man*—Gil Mille
- ☐ *Lost in Space*—John Williams
- ☐ *Thunderbirds*—Barry Gray
- ☐ *Time Tunnel*—John Williams
- ☐ *The Prisoner*—Ron Grainer
- ☐ *Captain Scarlet & The Mysterons*—Barry Gray
- ☐ *The Invaders*—Dominic Frontiere

My 3 favorite soundtrack composers:

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Additional movie or TV titles:

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- ☐ I am eager to see these scores released in record album format and would be willing to pay \$6.95 to \$7.95 each.



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Executive Producer Jack Webb, famed for the authentic look and feel of his TV productions, has done it again. To produce his new show, *Project: UFO*, Webb has hired the former head of Project Blue Book—the government's official UFO investigation.

# ***CLOSE ENCOUNTERS WITH AN OPEN MIND***

An Interview with *Project: UFO's* Producer  
**COLONEL WILLIAM T. COLEMAN**

Photos: NBC

*Project: UFO* examines the world of unidentified flying objects in an objective, albeit dazzling manner. Below: the show's first episode featured a robot-creature. Right: a spacecraft from the second episode.







By DAVID HOUSTON

If ever a TV detective show had an air of authenticity, it was Jack Webb's legendary *Dragnet* series. Webb created it, based its stories on actual police work and played the unflappable Sergeant Friday himself: "Just give me the facts, ma'm."

*Project: UFO*, Webb's latest series on NBC, is a detective drama of a different kind. But Webb insisted on the same kind of factual documentation and backgrounding for *UFO* as he provided for *Dragnet*. So he turned to the encyclopedia of UFO sightings—the Air Force's recently declassified Project Blue Book files. (Blue Book contains over 13,000 investigations of alleged

sightings.) And to insure the series' air of authenticity, Webb hired Colonel William T. Coleman as his line producer.

Coleman was in charge of Project Blue Book from 1961 to 1964, and his own bizarre experience with a UFO is one of those puzzling, unexplained sightings contained within its pages.

But to what extent are those volumes of intriguing reports—the Blue Book files themselves—being used for the series? Colonel Coleman replies calmly but quickly.

"We are basing all of our stories on actual cases from the files. When I came out here (to California) last July, we sat down and began to isolate the cases we wanted to use. Some cases contain as

Above: Actor William Jordan chats with producer Col. William T. Coleman on *UFO* set. Left: three sightings from *Project: UFO*.

many as 900 or 1000 pages . . . . We pull the files that interest us, and assign them to writers."

How are the cases chosen?

"We have a device. It's a simple right triangle with the vertical line divided into six levels of 'strangeness,' and the bottom line lettered 'A' through 'D', for degrees of credibility. We look for a '6-D'—a case with highest 'strangeness' also possessing highest credibility."

Coleman has an easy confidence about his ability to handle the TV series. Although his life has given him the air of an adventurer—one who might be







*Project: UFO* has its share of hoaxes, too. Here, a man imagines an alien encounter.

happiest pursuing the unknown with a gun and a camera—he is a natural as a Hollywood producer. In fact, so many aspects of Coleman's background converge on *Project: UFO* that his selection as its producer seems almost to have been fated.

He enlisted in the Air Force in April, 1942, and was a flight instructor, and saw combat in the South Pacific during World War II. After preparing a jet-fighter training program in Alaska, he left the Air Force in 1948 to run a family-owned resort in Florida—during which time he studied broadcasting at the University of Florida. In 1953, he taught that school's first course in television news production—while directing continuity at radio station WRUF in his off hours.

He was recalled to active duty for the Korea conflict. This involved his participation in nuclear testing in Nevada. He remembers it vividly:

"I was out there as an observer. It was to be the largest weapon ever detonated in the atmosphere in the U.S. We were only about 3,000 yards from ground zero in a regular war-type trench. I remember asking Dr. Gray, chief scientist of the Manhattan Project, 'How loud is this bang we're going to hear?' He said, 'I'm glad you asked that question. It will be many times louder than the loudest thing you've ever heard.' He warned us not to put our fingers in our ears, or cotton or anything, because the sound pressure would be so great. He said we should keep everything open. I'm sure my mouth was wide open—probably yelling, 'Help!'

"The first thing that happened was

the light. I was down in the trench squatting with a GI blanket folded lengthwise—which gave me about 8 layers—and wrapped several times around my eyes. I had almost 30 folds of GI blanket over my eyes, and I was sitting at the bottom of a trench—and still I saw the brightest light I have ever seen in my life.

"I've been standing next to 150 mm howitzers when they exploded. They were cap pistols. After the sound, the shock waves came. First the ground dropped vertically and I fell seven or eight inches; then the ground began to move laterally. We had a dummy dressed just like us right behind the trench: it completely disintegrated from the heat. One guy had stuck an ace of spades in the sand facing the shot; it looked like an eye surgeon had removed the spots. The white portions were scorched but reflective enough to sur-



vive. If you're near a blast, cover yourself with white and get below the shock waves.

"There was an unexpected wind shift—and we were trapped in that trench. We caught the brunt of the fallout and had to meander around there for some hours because it was too hot for vehicles to come and pick us up. We had to follow the constant radiation level to where it was weakest, and we ended up almost at ground zero—wearing nothing but battle fatigues and steel helmets.

"When they finally picked us up, we were all red all over. They got us right to the showers, and burned our clothing. That weapon had been 97 megatons—almost double what they thought it would be. I kicked myself for volunteering, and I wouldn't go through that again. But I'm glad I did it."

After witnessing this most awesome and sanity-taxing of explainable phenomena, he furthered his two lines of development—military science and engineering, and broadcasting and public information—by setting up, from scratch and on a shoestring, a fully operational TV station in the Philippines.

Coleman—who had been an occasional consultant during the earlier administrations of Blue Book's precursors, Project Sign and Project Grudge<sup>1</sup>—was appointed head of Project Blue Book in 1961. "When they wanted to make me head of Blue Book, I said, 'Wait a minute, you had better hear my story. They listened to the story of my own UFO sighting (more on this later). I remained objective and their conclusion was that I'd be ideal for the job.'"

Blue Book had been underway since 1952 and, when Coleman took over, all results reported were conspicuously negative. The press had dutifully followed the official line that flying saucer reports were being made by crackpots and careless observers—until around 1960, around the time Coleman entered the picture. At that time, numerous UFO reports made by highly credible witnesses—such as entire crews aboard aircrafts, ministers, and whole towns full of reputable citizens—began to appear in newspapers. Blue Book personnel remained noncommittal or worse. Coleman's first task, therefore, was to try to remove suspicion that the Air Force was engaged in a massive conspiratorial cover-up of dire truths.

"I was assigned as executive officer in public information, under the Secretary of the Air Force. One of the first things I did was to try to open up the files to newsmen. Now, some of the reports had to remain classified for very good reasons. If we had developed a weapon system and didn't want anybody to

know about it, we classified it. If one of these test weapons is sighted by, say, the crew of an airliner, and they report it as a UFO, we're not going to enlighten them. That would enlighten the Soviet Union and everybody else. The trouble with declassifying is that it can take years. To down-grade a file, it has to go back through everybody who ever received a copy of the initial report. There are specific Congressional laws regulating the procedure."

Why was so much classified in the beginning?

"It wasn't—not in the beginning. In 1947, if you'll recall, our relationships with certain allies had cooled a bit. But in '48 and '49 we began to approach the Korean War, and geo-politically we began to see things. Also, everybody was a bit concerned there at the beginning of the space age. I remember people laughing at the idea of putting a satellite in Earth orbit. In the beginning, we were concerned about two things: was our national security being threatened, and were we about to be surprised

get approval for it. My last obstacle was the Navy. The admiral didn't want any 30-foot (antenna) dishes on his aircraft carrier. I showed him where it could be located with no problems."

Coleman then was made co-chairman of the Air Force audio/visual committee—which was responsible for approving support for commercial motion pictures, plus production on the many films put out by the military. "I learned a lot about the business there."

Coleman appeared in the film *UFOs Past, Present And Future*—narrated by Rod Serling and others—and so made a name for himself as something of an authority on the subject. He has written two books on the use of animals in space experimentation and currently has a dramatic screenplay for which he is seeking a producer.

It's difficult to imagine who *else* Jack Webb might have approached last year, when *Project: UFO* was in need of a producer.

And how does Coleman feel about the series—is he satisfied that the TV show



Photos: ©NBC-TV

technologically—whether terrestrially or extra-terrestrially? But of course the mood of the country caught up with us after the Arnold sighting in Washington<sup>2</sup>, and people wanted to know everything we knew."

In 1964, Coleman was sent to Cape Canaveral.

"I went to the Cape as chief public affairs manager of space flights for Gemini and Apollo. All of the network pictures you saw were fed through my system." Coleman is credited with originating the idea: let's see the astronauts in pictures coming back from space, in real time. "Everybody thought I was crazy. I ended up having to go all the way to the Secretary of Defense to

<sup>2</sup>The first major UFO report that was widely publicized and that "caught on" with the public was a sighting by Kenneth Arnold, a salesman flying his own plane, near Mt. Rainier, in Washington State. He reported sighting nine crescent-shaped "discs" flying near the mountain. Press reports of the incident popularized the term "flying saucer."

William Jordan and Caskey Swaim are UFO investigators Jake Gatlin and Harry Fisk.

is true to the spirit of the Blue Book project?

"Very definitely. Jack would do it no other way. But of course it's a dramatization. What we see is what the witnesses *say* they saw."

Are either of the two leading characters an incarnation of himself?

"No. The two characters typify the investigators we had on Blue Book. When we created the characters, we actually went all the way back to their births, to keep them accurate. Our Sergeant (played by Caskey Swaim), for instance, is a young lad who got a couple years of junior college under his belt and then joined the Air Force. On the Air Force 'bootstrap' program, he got his bachelor's degree. He's pretty sharp. He tested out well, so they sent him off

<sup>1</sup>For a concise history of the Air Force activities concerning UFOs throughout Project Sign, Grudge, and Blue Book, see *The Hynek UFO Report*, by Dr. J. Allen Hynek—a current Dell paperback.



to intelligence school. So that's how he got into Blue Book. In fact, in every case, all of the people in Blue Book have to have a background in intelligence."

What does Coleman see as the theme of *Project: UFO*?

"Detective work, on the part of our two leads, and the various laboratories and exacting disciplines they use. Now some of the cases will be solved quickly, and others will not. But it's more than a detective story, more than a documentary, more than entertainment."

Is his own UFO sighting likely to turn up as a script?

"I wouldn't be surprised. It would qualify as a '6-D.'"

Our close encounter with Col. Coleman was almost over. It ended with a lengthy, detailed, dramatic recounting of his experience with a flying saucer—an experience that would challenge the most aloof scientists and journalists to remain objective.

"I went down to Miami International Airport, in 1954, with a crew, to pick up an overhauled attack bomber—to test it out and deliver it to the air base in Greenville, Mississippi. It was a Sunday afternoon with clear skies, unusual visibility—I'd say up to 40 miles. Flying over central Florida, we could see both the Atlantic and the Gulf.

"Just south of Montgomery, Alabama, north of the Florida line, I reached over and punched my co-pilot and said, 'Hey, take it; I'm going to relax for a minute.' I had my parachute up, had slid back on the track, and was just starting to drop my head back. . . .

"The crew was myself, the co-pilot, and the flight engineer. And I had two technical representatives, one from Lockheed Aircraft Company and one from the Jet Engine Division of General Motors Corporation. They were both engineers.

"Anyway, I was looking around and noticed an object well above me, up to

about 10,000 feet above me, going in the same direction I was. It was at about 2 o'clock position. We seemed to be gaining on it. I thought, 'it really ought to be drawing a contrail at that altitude.' I turned to my co-pilot and said, 'Look at 2 o'clock; what do you see? A shiny white object?' He looked and said, 'Yeah, it's just a reflection in the upper windshield.' I said maybe.

"I rolled my seat back up on the track and took the airplane again. I started to turn. Now when you do that, the reflection should either disappear or fall off to the side. But I made the turn, and it didn't clear up. The co-pilot said, 'Yeah, there is something.' Then he said, 'We shouldn't be gaining on it.'

"I said it was descending. I came back to my original heading. We were about four miles from it when it crossed my altitude. I said, 'That's an odd looking thing. I don't see a vertical stabilizer, and I don't see any sign of the wings. We thought it was probably a test vehicle out of Elgin Air Force Base. I said, 'Let's see what it is.'

"I started descending with it. We were closing in with it all the time—about two miles now. One mile. It was getting right down on top of the trees pretty fast. Still no sight of vertical stabilizer or wings. I called the two engineers to come up. 'Did you see that?' They said, 'Yes, what is it?' I said we didn't know, but we were going to find out.

"I asked the flight engineer to go into the bombardier's compartment, where he'd have a different perspective. He went through the crawlway under the flightdeck floor, and when he got up there, he checked in. 'What do you see?' I asked him. He said, 'Same thing I saw when I was with you.'

"I told everybody, 'Don't discuss this thing, but just look at it; capture every detail you can see. Size, speed, all your own impressions.

"When we were within half a mile we could see that it was a circular object. It was about 60 feet in diameter, 10 feet thick, tapering from the center. No join lines, no rivet lines—just a solid disc. It had no lights. It wasn't painted. It was a dull gray color—like titanium. If it was titanium, I don't need to tell you the engineering problems of making a 60-foot titanium disc.

"We were close, but I purposefully kept my distance because I didn't want to get into the vortex of it, not that low on the ground; you could lose control of your aircraft. I had no idea what sort of vortex it might be generating.

"Finally when we were within an eighth of a mile, I said, 'Okay, keep your heads cool; we're going to overtake it, and I want you to capture every detail that you can. Has anybody got a camera?' There wasn't a camera among us.

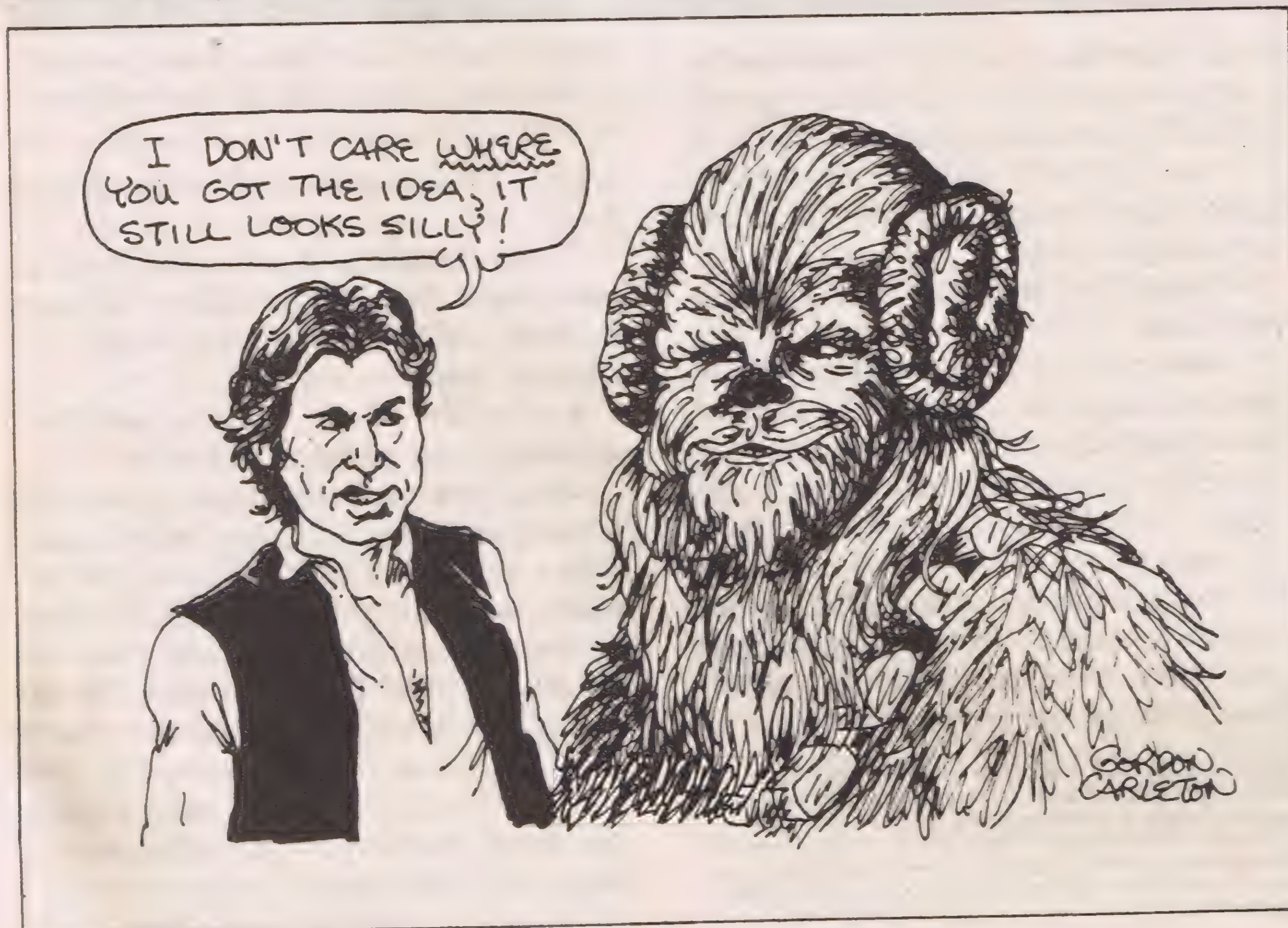
"I made a hard four or five second pitch to come alongside him so that he would have to look into the sun, not us. In that time, suddenly, it was gone. We had seen its shadow on the ground; it had passed over a barn, so we had a pretty good idea of the size of it. I said, 'It's gone somewhere.' I pulled up hard to see if it had dropped back and was following me. It wasn't. I leveled off at about 2000 feet. We were all looking back—and we saw it. And we saw its shadow moving across a freshly plowed field. It was bearing right down on the ground and leaving a dust trail in its vortex.

"I ran what I thought would be an intercept course—based on my judgement of its speed. But by the time I got to the end of the field—about two and a half miles—it was gone. The dust was still lingering. That time, we lost it altogether.

"I told the guys not to discuss it—not even with their wives—and to go home and write up a report, a complete report in chronological order, A to Z.

"They turned them in the next morning. All five reports agreed, which is a rare thing, and that was the end of it.

"Now what did I see? I don't know. If I had let faith enter the picture, I might have said I was obviously looking at a vehicle from another world—because I knew the technology of what I was looking at didn't exist on this planet . . . but I don't go that far. Were we the subjects of mass hypnosis? I discussed that with some experts in the field. They said no, that there was nothing that would have promulgated it on that flight. We checked for a fume leak in the flight deck. Nothing. There were no other sightings of it reported. No other aircraft within a hundred miles. As we had passed over the fields, I asked the guys to see if they could spot any people outside looking. No. If you could have interviewed the cows or horses, we might have gotten something." ★





## Communications

(continued from page 5)

#12 about *Close Encounters of The Third Kind*. Like Mr. Zimmerman, I too, was awed by the use of special effects in the movie. But there were just too many unanswered questions at the end of the movie, and I left extremely disappointed.

Lydia Bobash  
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... My heartfelt congratulations for Ed Naha's article on Steven Spielberg's enigmatic film, *CE3K*. STARLOG is increasingly becoming one of the more literate SF publications. Howard Zimmerman's review, however, fails to convince because he attempts to limit *Close Encounters* to a science fiction perspective. He is not alone. Many SF fans do not realize film is a different medium from written SF; that it relies heavily on visual concentration and is more demanding of the artist involved. Zimmerman criticizes the film for leaving too many unanswered questions, yet Ernest Hemmingway once said the most important part of fiction is that which is left to the readers' imagination.

Alexander Strachan  
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... He says "too many questions were left unanswered..." My God! What does he want? A textbook answering everything he doesn't understand? If the movie answered everything it would probably be draggy and boring... not to mention six hours long.

Paul Lake  
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... What was the content of the conversation that took place between the computers and the ship? A bunch of notes. What really matters is the fact that the aliens communicate fluently in music, a universal language capable of transcending all conventional forms of verbalization. Why have the aliens come? To smile at us.

Tom O'Neill

... *Close Encounters* contains every cheap shot and cliché that Steven Spielberg could get into it. I was disillusioned with the movie right from the first few minutes—when Spielberg brought the Bermuda Triangle into the story. He went on to nauseate me with a mashed potato mountain and with Richard Dreyfuss shoveling dirt through the kitchen window. The movie is pure popcorn and Spielberg must think his audience will swallow anything.

Bruce Hermes  
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... As to Mr. Zimmerman's objection that *CE* is not real SF because it does not ask "what if?" and then present detailed extrapolation of the premise—sit back for a

moment and try to recall how many of the handful of good SF films really drew their strength from plot developments based on "what if?" The best films have said merely, "isn't this interesting?" (*Forbidden Planet*) or "isn't this pretty?" (*2001*) or "isn't this fun?" (*Star Wars*). Whenever elements of literary "whatifness" have crept into SF films, they have tended to be boring, pretentious or silly. ("What if everyone were put to death at age thirty?"). "What if" works in books, not movies. I think we should be grateful if an occasional SF film tells a coherent and interesting story and gives us some visual excitement and beauty.

Don Dixon  
Rialto, California

### INSIDE ANIMATION

... Being in the animation business myself, I was most interested in your article on the production of the animated version of *Star Trek* (issue No. 6). I've long been of the opinion that animation would be an ideal medium for a high quality adult TV series, however, as you state in your article, the networks get cold feet over "cartoons," and automatically consign them to low budget kidvid viewing. Even out here in Australia, at the moment, it is possible to view the current live action *Star Trek* reruns during prime time evening viewing, yet to see the animated series, you have to be up at 6 o'clock in the morning! Such is the appetite of Saturday morning TV however, that most studios in America are flat out just to satisfy this market alone. Often work is contracted out to studios in other countries around the world... The big Hanna-Barbera studios maintains a full-time studio in Sydney as well as Hollywood; SF and fantasy buffs might be surprised to learn that such shows as *Valley of the Dinosaurs*, many *Superfriends* episodes and the *Lost In Space* TV special were actually made "down under." Another local studio, Air Programmes International, has for years been supplying the CBS network with one hour TV specials of famous classic stories... as *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, *Master of the World* and *Mysterious Island*. Currently, you might be interested to learn, they are working on an animated TV special of Arthur C. Clarke's *Rendezvous With Rama* for late 1978 screening in the U.S. However, the sad fact remains that while current network attitudes prevail, any made-for-TV animated film; no matter where it is produced or whatever the subject, will be handicapped by production values that range downwards from the barely adequate to the downright BAD. And if you want to know the reason why, for BAD read Budgets and Deadlines—the twin banes of an animation producer's life. By Saturday morning TV standards, the \$75,000 you quote as the budget of each animated *Star Trek* episode was indeed high; some shows being produced by other studios at the same time cost about half that sum—and pretty crummy they were, too! Yet, such is the way we shortchange our kids, even \$75,000 is peanuts compared to the money being spent on so-called "adult" prime time shows. For example, a recent article in "Variety" estimates that each half-hour episode of such live-action cheapies as *Welcome Back Kotter*, *On Our Own*, and *Soap* costs around \$165,000 to make. Our animation director would drool at the thought of what he could turn out for that kind of money! And when he sees the budgets

(continued on page 71)



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# THE SAGA OF CAPRICORN ONE: A WATERGATE IN SPACE

By RICHARD MEYERS and ED NAHA

The rocket carrying the Capricorn One capsule sits placidly on its launching pad. All eyes at the Kennedy Space Center nervously watch the seconds tick by during the final countdown. In a few minutes, the United States will launch its first manned mission to the planet Mars. Inside the craft, eager astronauts Willis, Walker and Brubaker mechanically check their instrument readings. They are on the way to the history books. Suddenly, the capsule hatchway swings

Is this a new example of government cover-up thinking? Could it be fact? Fiction? Nightmare?

Actually, the saga of the three would-be astronauts and their bogus voyage to Mars is the plot of the controversial new film *Capricorn One*, a hard-core science-fiction look at government dishonesty. In the world of *Capricorn One*, deception and murder run rampant and idealism takes a back seat to intrigue. Needless to say, the film's fairly pessimistic view of what the U.S. space pro-

site. Kelloway, however, does not count on two factors in his smooth scenario: the idealism of the astronauts and the fanaticism of government bureaucracy.

As the astronauts glumly go through the motions, an unnamed government agency goes about its business—making sure the Capricorn mission, fraud though it may be, is a successful one. A radio-controlled explosive device is planted on a plane that is taking the astronauts' families to the landing site and any government employees or reporters who sense something wrong with the mission are promptly assassinated.

The scope of the space-age scam grows to disastrous proportions. Elliot Witter (Robert Walden), a NASA control monitor, accidentally discovers that the transmission signals from "Mars" are originating from a point not 300 miles away from headquarters. He is summarily done away with. Reporter Robert Caufield (Elliot Gould) stumbles onto the same fact and finds himself careening through a Midwestern town in a car sans the benefit of brakes.

Eventually, the entire Capricorn fiasco goes up in smoke, literally, when the returning module loses its heat shield during re-entry. With the eyes of the world upon it, the capsule disintegrates. Now "legally dead," Willis, Walker and Brubaker find themselves prime targets for assassination by a government determined to provide the world with the moving story of three valiant (and decidedly deceased) space heroes.

As strange and terrifying as *Capricorn's* plot may seem, there are some space program critics who believe that such a plot *has already occurred* in reality. The idea of a fraudulent space shot has engrossed a small coterie of skeptics since 1969, when Neil Armstrong first set foot on the Moon. Eventually, this negative feeling crystallized in a book entitled *We Never Went To The Moon*, in which Bill Kaysing and Randy Reid suggested that the Defense Intelligence Agency set up a secret soundstage in the Nevada desert where simulated Moon landings took place for the public's benefit.

Writer/director Peter Hyams' own variation came into being nearly three years ago but it was not until January 3, 1977 that *Capricorn One* got under way. After spending considerable time and effort trying unsuccessfully to sell his



Above: A super secret Government agency teams with NASA to fake an outer space docking procedure for the benefit of the television audience.

open. Dr. James Kelloway hastily pulls the men out of the module. NASA scientists have just discovered a faulty life-support system that would have killed all three men within days!

Kelloway ushers the trio away from the launch site and, incredibly, orders the countdown to continue. The NASA official is convinced that the scrapping of the mission would have an anti-NASA effect in the Congress; the President himself has stressed that the future of the space program rests upon the success of Capricorn One. NASA chiefs hastily devise a way to please all parties. They will keep the life-support system breakdown a secret, launch the empty spaceship and fake the Martian landing scenes from television studios halfway across the country. For millions of spectators Willis, Walker and Brubaker will make that trip to Mars.

gram could degenerate into is causing quite an uproar in space science circles. And, as the film unfolds, the shady shenanigans get worse!

Willis (Sam Waterston), Walker (O.J. Simpson) and Brubaker (James Brolin) are led by Kelloway (Hal Holbrook) to a desert complex where the three astronauts are forced to talk to "Earth" from their capsule in "space," thus continuing the Capricorn deception. The trio is then led onto two gigantic sound stages. One stage is constructed to resemble a complete command module, the other is an exacting recreation of the Martian landscape.

Kelloway and his cronies plan to transmit the "live" landing on Mars, recreate the trip back, allow the empty module to splashdown safely and then whisk the three astronauts (via private jet and, then, helicopter) to the landing



bizarre screenplay to most of the major studios, Hyams teamed up with independent producer Paul N. Lazarus III, the producer of *Westworld* and *Futureworld*. The two set out to create, on the screen, one of the most terrifying examples of governmental manipulation and vice ever imagined. At the same time, they sparked quite a bit of angst in real government circles because of the way they went about creating the aforementioned dirty work.

The film unit's Los Angeles shooting went off without a hitch, as did the exciting sequences staged in the Mojave Desert (where the three astronauts temporarily escape their government pursuers only to face the threat of death by heat, scorpion and rattlesnake. A death-defying dogfight involving a World War I biplane (piloted by Telly Savalas) and two government helicopters was also filmed without any major difficulties.

The real controversy surrounding *Capricorn One* arose out of the filming of the infamous "fake Mars-landing" sequences. Producer Lazarus was quoted as claiming that, although the movie's screenplay was less than kind to NASA, the agency extended total cooperation to *Capricorn One* in regards to staging these Martian frauds. Lazarus, who worked hand-in-hand with NASA during the filming of *Futureworld*, said he was frankly surprised by the agency's readiness to supply him with material and technical savvy. The motion picture's production notes (handed out to the press) stated: "More than a half-million dollars of NASA hardware has been loaned . . . In addition, NASA has assisted in all areas of scientific technology relevant to the Manned Space Program and this particular film."

Now, while the vision of NASA generously offering aid to a basically pessimistic look at the race for space is indeed heartwarming, according to NASA it is also untrue. Bob Shafer, NASA's Deputy Director of Public Affairs for Media Services isn't too happy with the publicity *Capricorn One* is dredging up concerning the agency.

"We've helped an awful lot of people with a lot of interesting films over the years," he says, "but the thrust of the film is such that we really couldn't lend ourselves to it. The point (of the movie) is an utter falsification of a mission. It isn't just fantasy, it's far worse than that. We did not cooperate in the making of the film."

NASA's complaint, at this point, is falling on deaf ears. Filmed over a year ago, *Capricorn One* is a virtual cinematic *fait accompli*. The cast and crew have dispersed over the four corners of the globe. The production company, nurtured by ITC, has nothing to say on the subject and the film's distributors, Warner Brothers, simply don't know the details.

NASA, however, has plenty of details



Above: Brubaker (James Brolin) has faced scorpions, rattlesnakes and sunstroke to get this far. Will the Governmental assassins now get him?

and they're not about to ignore them. In terms of *Capricorn One*'s highly touted unlimited assistance from NASA, Shafer admits that there was some aid given to the project. "There was some *pro forma* kind of stuff that almost anyone can get. And I literally mean that. ANYONE."

And while Shafer allows that the film unit did pick up some cursory space artifacts and information along the way, he insists that it was not at all important in nature. Chuck Biggs, the Johnson Space Center's Exhibits Manager, echoes Shafer's feelings. "You know," he says, "when a movie company comes to us right off, they think we have spacecraft out in a spacecraft storage area. They asked for a simulator and a command module and two TV-2 instrumentations for a command module and couches. Then, when they found out we just didn't have these things for loan, George Stokes (*Capricorn*'s Construction Coordinator) came down and climbed through scrap piles and excess

## CAPRICORN ONE CAST & CREDITS

*Capricorn One*: A Warner Brothers film. 1978. 124 minutes. Color and Panavision. Produced by Paul N. Lazarus III. Written and Directed by Peter Hyams. Associate Producer: Michael Rachmil. Director of Photography: Bill Butler. Music by Jerry Goldsmith. Art Director: David M. Haber. Set Decorator: Rick Simpson. Costume Designer: Patricia Norris. Key Special Effects: Henry Millar Jr. Special Effects: Henry Millar Sr., Bob Spurlock, Bruce Mattox. Makeup: Mike Westmore. Miniature Coordinator: Ernie Hubber. Opticals and Processing by CFI. Special Visual Effects by Van Der Veer Photo Effects.

Robert Caufield . . . . .	Elliott Gould
Charles Brubaker . . . . .	James Brolin
Kay Brubaker . . . . .	Brenda Vaccaro
Peter Willis . . . . .	Sam Waterston
John Walker . . . . .	O. J. Simpson
Dr. James Kelloway . . . . .	Hal Holbrook
Judy Drinkwater . . . . .	Karen Black
Albain . . . . .	Telly Savalas
Betty Walker . . . . .	Denise Nicholas
Hollis Peaker . . . . .	David Huddleston

Below: The three astronauts prowl the desert soundstage where the Mars landing is to be faked. Question: Will their consciences let them go through with it?





property areas. This is what they finally decided they could use in lieu of a nice full-up spacecraft."

With a trace of irony in his voice, Bigg lists the space artifacts which turn up in the film: an Apollo docking probe (an unused research and development item), a crew hatch and a forward hatch ring, three crew couches borrowed from a Battleground, Washington school, an E-2 capsule mock-up made by Rockwell in the early days of the Apollo program, a wooden command module mock-up and a back hatch. The total acquisition value of the aforementioned items ranges from \$138,000 to \$350,000.

"That really doesn't mean anything," Shafer is quick to point out. "If you're talking about the cost of an Apollo spacecraft (the approximate cost of a Saturn V launch alone, which the Apollo crafts use as boosters, is 200 to 400 million dollars) a half million is nothing. I don't even know where they come up with a number like half a million."

Shafer also doesn't know where the production notes come off saying things like "the landing module is an exact reproduction based on the specifications from NASA and will be used in the docking sequence along with a command module which has been provided by NASA."

"I can tell you categorically that we never provided technical expertise in the making of *Capricorn One*," Shafer carps. "He (Lazarus) may have had relationships of his own with individuals in the agency or who are employed by contractors of the agency and he may have turned to them on a personal basis. But on an official basis, we did not provide him with technical expertise and if that is his contention, it is simply not true."

If such is the case, then why is *Capricorn One* playing up NASA's involvement? Part of the answer might lie in the fact that during the filming of *Futureworld*, Lazarus extensively used the Houston space center's facilities. That little piece of publicity information helped establish that film as a solid box office attraction.

Shafer recalls the *Futureworld* epic as a pleasant exercise in mutual cooperation. "We did, as a matter of fact, work with *Futureworld* to a great extent. But Lazarus was promoting our cooperation (on *Capricorn One*) before he ever did much in the way of negotiations with us. It in no way compares to the kind of cooperation he had on *Futureworld*. No way."

NASA's actual involvement with *Capricorn* consisted of the previously mentioned equipment and the presence

of Bob Nulton, a NASA employee at Rockwell International in California who made sure that the Government property was properly treated (but professes no other technical advice. Messrs. Shafer and Bigg trace their own involvement with the project to October 6, 1977 when Bigg (who also worked with *Stowaway To The Moon* and *The Bob Hope Apollo Seven Special*) went to his superior, Harold Still, and told him of Lazarus' requests.

"In this particular case, Still advised us that it was within our guidelines for us to support the request," Bigg remembers. "But he emphasized that it should be of no cost to the Government. That was the main factor."

With this tentative green light given, *Capricorn One's* plight then made its way to Shafer. "Lazarus was told by the Cap to forward the script to me for review prior to further discussion at the center level. I never heard from him. Eventually we were able to learn a great deal about the storyline from promotional pieces. On January 11, 1977, the Kennedy Space Center Public Affairs office was advised that cooperation would be inappropriate."

Although some film and science buffs sympathize with NASA's reaction to the movie's paranoid plotline, there are some uneasy feelings afoot that their

Below: This particular shot starts with a closeup of the flag reflected in the helmet visor then pulls back until the entire soundstage is visible, gently satirizing the famous moon photograph.







Above: Sam Waterston (left) thought the whimsical Willis character would be a change from his usual Shakespearean roles, while James Brolin (center) and O.J. Simpson look on their parts as career boosts.

non-cooperation stance just may have infringed on the right of freedom of speech—in this case, writer Hyams' right to suggest that the government is not above subterfuge. Since *NASA* is a public organization, some critics of this sticky situation feel that an explanation is in order. Why didn't they cooperate?

"Basically, it's all judgmental," Shafer offers. "Our main justification has to be that NASA is merely a caretaker for a facility that belongs to the people at large. Film producers are people in that context, so we always work in that way. But essentially we require that (the film) be a pretty honest depiction of our responsibilities. If it is not, and I don't mean to be critical or uncritical, if it doesn't fall clearly into the category of fantasy or science fiction, then it's got to stick pretty much to the facts or we don't get very deeply involved."

It is obvious that Shafer is deeply involved with his work and is nonplussed by the Lazarus/Hyams co-production and the subsequent misleading publicity.

"I think these people know of our disaffection for this film and the way they've gone about it. Most of us are here because it's a very straightforward agency to work for. You don't have to

worry about the games you were playing yesterday because you don't play them here. Most of the guys who have jobs like mine come out of the very industry we deal with—the large editorial community. So it's our credibility at stake as individuals. We simply don't screw around with it. There's no way this agency can do business in secret."

With or without NASA's "Business," *Capricorn One* successfully paints a truly frightening portrait of a mono-maniacal government. A government that would stop at nothing to continue the space program, even if it meant faking an entire mission and then systematically hunting down and killing its astronaut-heroes. Coming hot on the heels of the blatantly optimistic (if not idealistic) *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind* smashes, *Capricorn One* may indeed be a rather harsh slap in the face of some of science fiction's more orthodox dreamers. A slap, which many SF and space enthusiasts feel, may actually hinder NASA's real-life program. It's no secret that, at present, the White House is carefully re-evaluating its commitment to the exploration of space. Will *Capricorn One* be a negative factor?

Although Bob Shafer is concerned, he's not all that worried. "Is there any

political effect out of all this?" he asks with a verbal shrug. "Does *Star Wars* change a Congress' attitude? Does *Capricorn One* change a White House's attitude about space funding? Does *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind* make it possible to engage in more adventure-some programs? It's so entirely speculative that there's no way you can reach a conclusion. But the *U.S. News And World Report* survey last week supplied some interesting data. Which institutions have the greatest credibility? Science and technology. Which institutions are able to get things done? Science and technology. That wouldn't have happened a year ago."

And so, as NASA graciously grits its teeth, relying on the public's faith in futuristic science to see them through the storm, *Capricorn One* readies itself for national exposure. Taut, frightening, disturbing and ultimately uplifting, it joins the current SF cycle, making its way from theater to theater. And, despite its bureaucracy, the movie does force its audiences to think about the space program seriously, to think about how and why our exploration of the solar system and beyond is so important to the survival of this planet.

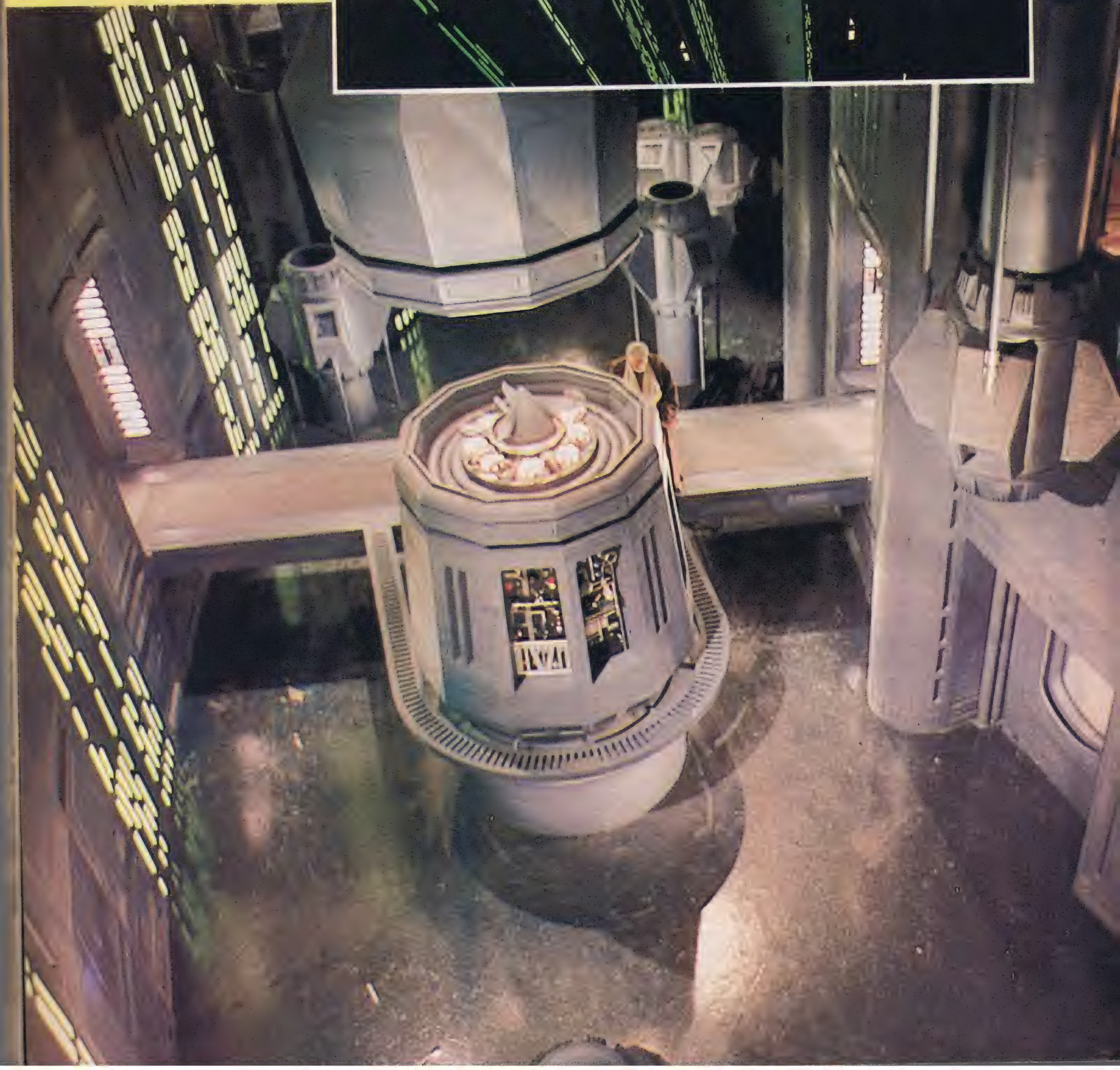
Even NASA couldn't ask for better publicity than that. ★



Below: The original live-action plate shot on the *Star Wars* set in London. Right: When combined with Ellenshaw's painting, the effect of a vertiginous power shaft is achieved that would otherwise be too costly and nearly impossible to build in a studio.



Photos: © 1977 20th Century-Fox





# THE MAGICAL TECHNIQUES OF MOVIE AND TV SPECIAL EFFECTS

Part IX

## The Matte Artist:

An Interview with

**P. S. Ellenshaw**

Series Edited by DAVID HUTCHISON

The successful matte painter is the “closet artist” of the film industry—a man whose work remains invisible to the movie-going public; a skillful blend of what is and what is not, creating a single cinematic reality.

By DAVID HOUSTON

If I ever become famous for my matte paintings, it'll mean I'm a failure," says P.S. Ellenshaw, the young director of the matte department at Walt Disney Studios. Disney—where some of the world's most sophisticated blends of live action and painting are accomplished, where mattes abound in even the most “realistic” motion-picture ventures . . .

“If people come to see me and say how much they enjoyed my work in such and such a movie, I get worried. Matte painting is supposed to be invisible, supposed to blend in with the live-action footage.”

Ellenshaw has headed the Disney matte department for the past four

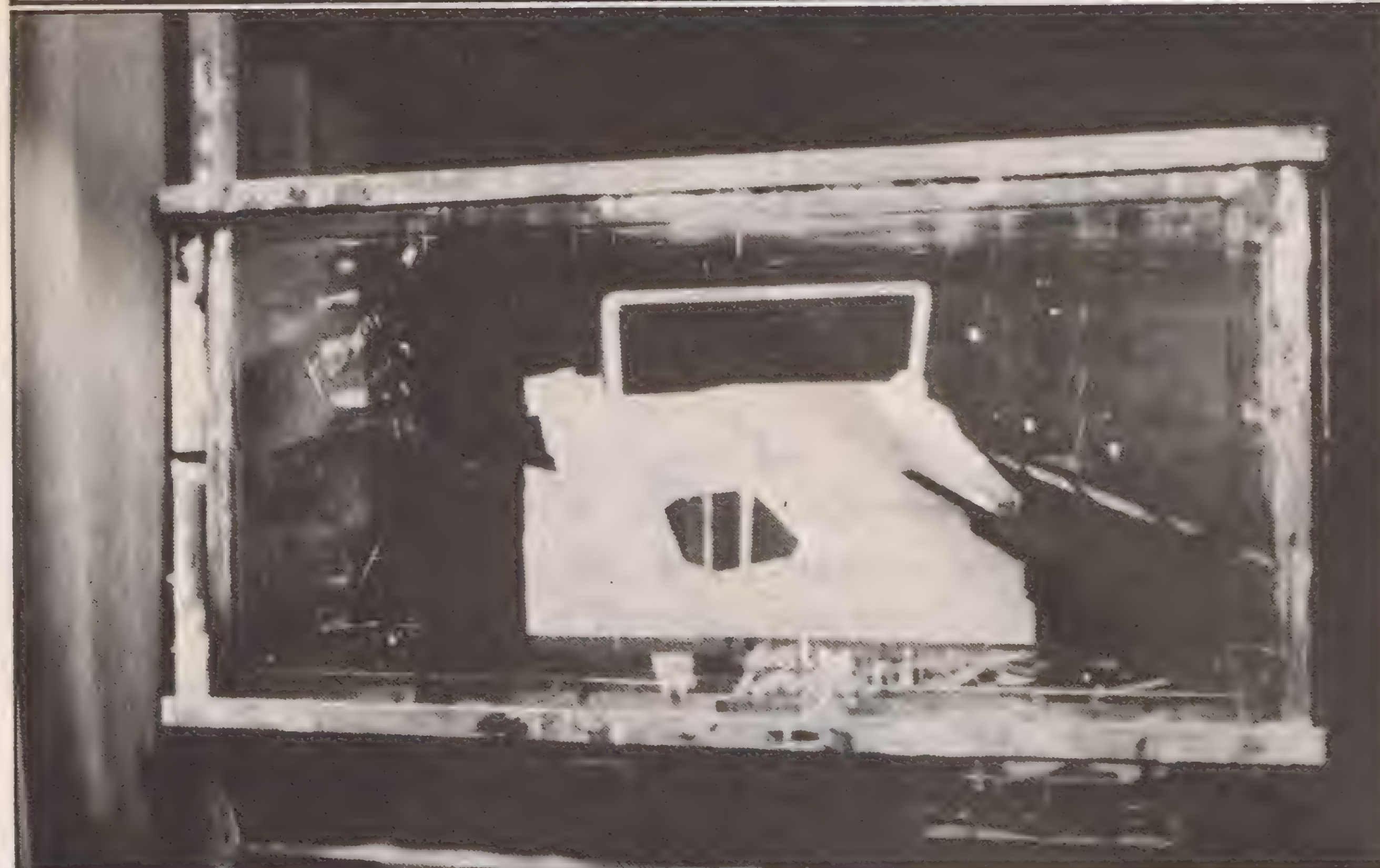
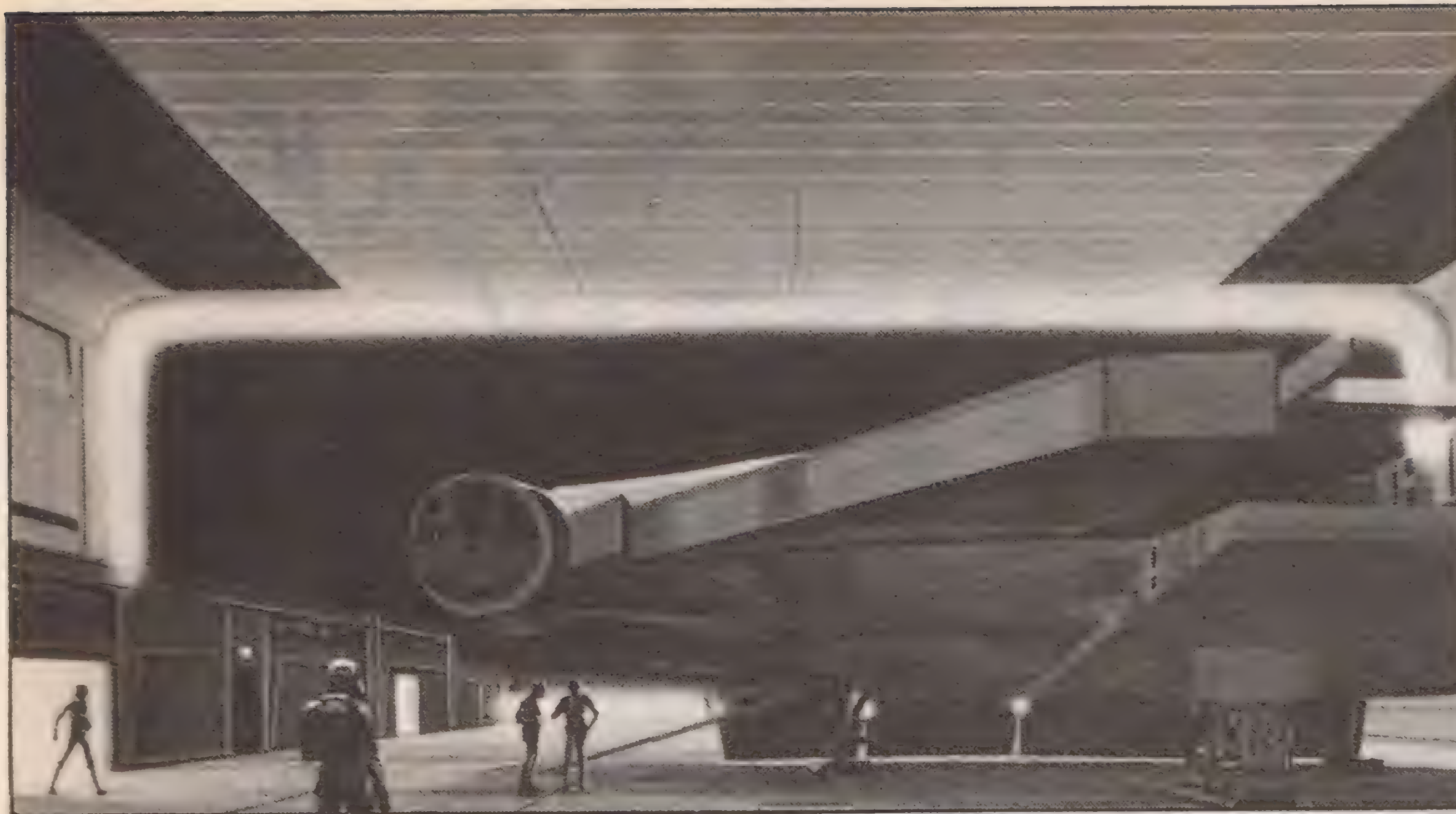
This is the ninth part in STARLOG's feature series on Special Effects. **Part I—The Use of Miniatures** appeared in issue No. 6. **Part II—Robby the Robot** appeared in No. 7. **Part III—Model Animation** appeared in No. 8. **Part IV—Magicam** appeared in No. 9. **Part V—How To Roll Your Own** appeared in No. 10. **Part VI—The Makeup Men: John Chambers, Rick Baker and Stuart Freeborn** appeared in No. 11. **Part VII—The Makeup Men: Dan Striepeke and Dick Smith** appeared in No. 12. **Part VIII—The Matte Artist: Matthew Yuricich** appeared in No. 13.

Left: P.S. Ellenshaw describes how the live-action plate fits into the matte painting.



Photo: David Houston





The Death Star hangar set from conception to final print: top, McQuarrie's original sketch of the scene showing the basic elements required. Middle: A matte painting is devised to complete the set. Bottom: The complete composite in anamorphic.

years and has overseen work on numerous pictures (most recently *Return From Witch Mountain* and *The Cat From Outer Space*); but ask him to name the project that personally excited him more than any other and he will quickly smile and announce: "*Star Wars*."

When people claim that during post-production, every studio in town had a hand in the making of *Star Wars*, don't be quick to doubt it. Not only did Ellenshaw paint the mattes, free-lance, but Disney studios itself was contracted to do much of the matte photography.

P.S. Ellenshaw (in person one might call him Peter, but not in print; Peter Ellenshaw is the professional name of his father, who headed Disney's matte department at one time himself and in more recent years has established himself internationally as a fine artist) is a friendly, talkative type in his explanations. He will tell us about his work in *Star Wars*, show some of the actual mattes (such as the one on the cover of this issue), explain the matte process and how Disney techniques differ from those of other studios and artists, and share aspects of his personal life that led him to his career choice and the perfecting of his art.

STARLOG No. 13 introduced the fundamentals of matte painting, but for the benefit of new readers or for review, a *matte* is an element of a movie scene or shot which blacks out unwanted portions of a picture; a *matte painting* is the artistic replacement for the blacked-out portion; the live-action portion of the picture is the *plate*.

"About three years ago, I was asked by Nicholas Roeg to work on *The Man Who Fell To Earth*. Normally there's enough work here at Disney, and the matte department has not become involved in outside work. But I was kind of intrigued by the project, and I squeezed it in my spare time. Then word got out that I would do outside work, and a few inquiries began to come in. I turned down most of the work.

"Then, I guess about two and a half years ago, I was contacted by Gary Kurtz. *Star Wars* had not been filmed yet, but they brought me Ralph McQuarrie's sketches—and I said, 'This is super; God, I'd like to work on this!'

"McQuarrie's paintings really sold that film. I mean, if it weren't for his production illustrations they never would have got the financing from 20th Century Fox. Anyway, they asked me to do the matte shots and I said, 'I'd love to; give me a call when you're ready to shoot them.' They said they were on their way to London and would contact me later. Then I heard nothing.

"Normally, the film company does not come and say, 'We have this can of film, and we want you to put the castles or big trees or whatever in the background or the foreground. I'm always



there when the film is being shot, because I have to make sure the camera is tied off, that the people don't walk into where the painting is going to be, that the lens they're using isn't too wide—because you may have to reduce the image. A lot of little things.

"So when I read in the L.A. *Times* that they were shooting in London, I figured they had got somebody else to do the mattes. Too bad—but just one of those things.

"Then, a year ago last fall, Jim Nelson (with the *Star Wars* company)

### Ellenshaw:

*"I had avoided (becoming a matte artist) because my father had been so successful, and it's tough to come up to that."*



Photo: David Houston

called me and said, 'Well, we're getting in some footage, you wanna come look at it?'

"I made up my mind to put up a fight—you know, that I had not been there when they were shooting, all that kind of stuff. But George Lucas really is an excellent director; he understands so many facets of filmmaking that every single matte shot worked out. It couldn't have been better. So I did the mattes for *Star Wars*."

According to Ellenshaw, there are 17 matte shots in *Star Wars*, utilizing 13 paintings. Some of these were not terribly spectacular—like the addition of a distant Sandcrawler as seen from C3PO's point of view, and an establishing shot in the Cantina where the task was to paint in a wall section to mask off some unwanted people. But other shots involving matte paintings were among the most spectacular in the film.

Consider the shot of Ben Kenobi walking along the precarious platform over the "infinitely" deep power shaft on the Death Star. To have constructed that set—just as the audience sees it—would have been prohibitively expensive. "Actually," Ellenshaw explains, "Guinness was approximately three feet off the floor." The tractor beam control unit, the platform, and pieces of the surrounding walls were built. The rest is a painting by P.S. Ellenshaw.

Another view of the power shaft was painted to add depth and vastness to a shot just prior to Luke and Leia's swing across the chasm.

Consider the interior of the hangar deck on the Death Star. Only half of Han's pirate ship was actually constructed, the other half (as seen by Luke and Leia from a port above the floor of the hangar) is a matched photograph of the *model* of the pirate ship, with painted-in areas to facilitate the blend and correct for the slight differences between the full-scale mocked-up half and the model. The "pit" in the floor leading to lower decks is also painted.

In the wide shot establishing the vast Throne Room at the conclusion of the film, not even all the *people* are real: the soldiers in the dark, toward the sides, are "attentive" because they're a painting! The rear wall with its super-high bright windows is part of the same painting.

As Ben and Luke look over the floor of the desert to Mos Eisley, they are "looking" into a painting of the spaceport over a photograph of Death Valley.

A matte artist can be involved with more than paints and brushes. Ellenshaw dealt with other sorts of combination pictures. In the Throne Room, for instance, there were only a few hundred extras in the assembly. That group was photographed three times, standing at three different distances from the

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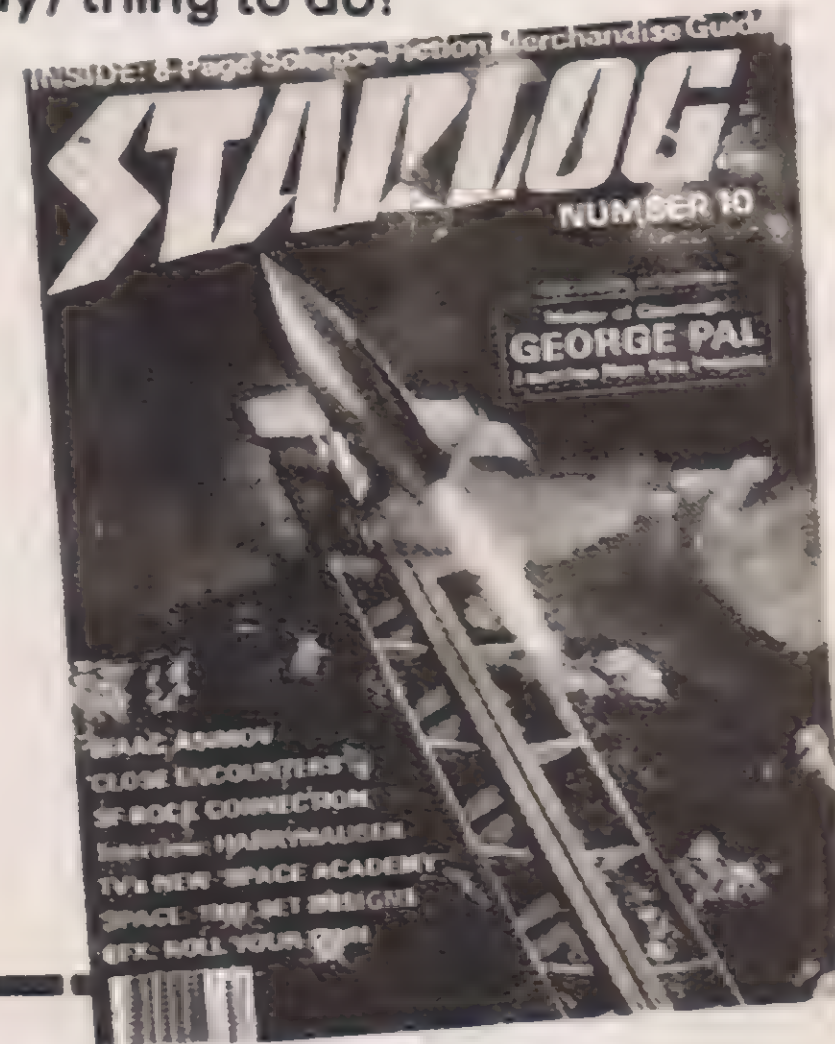
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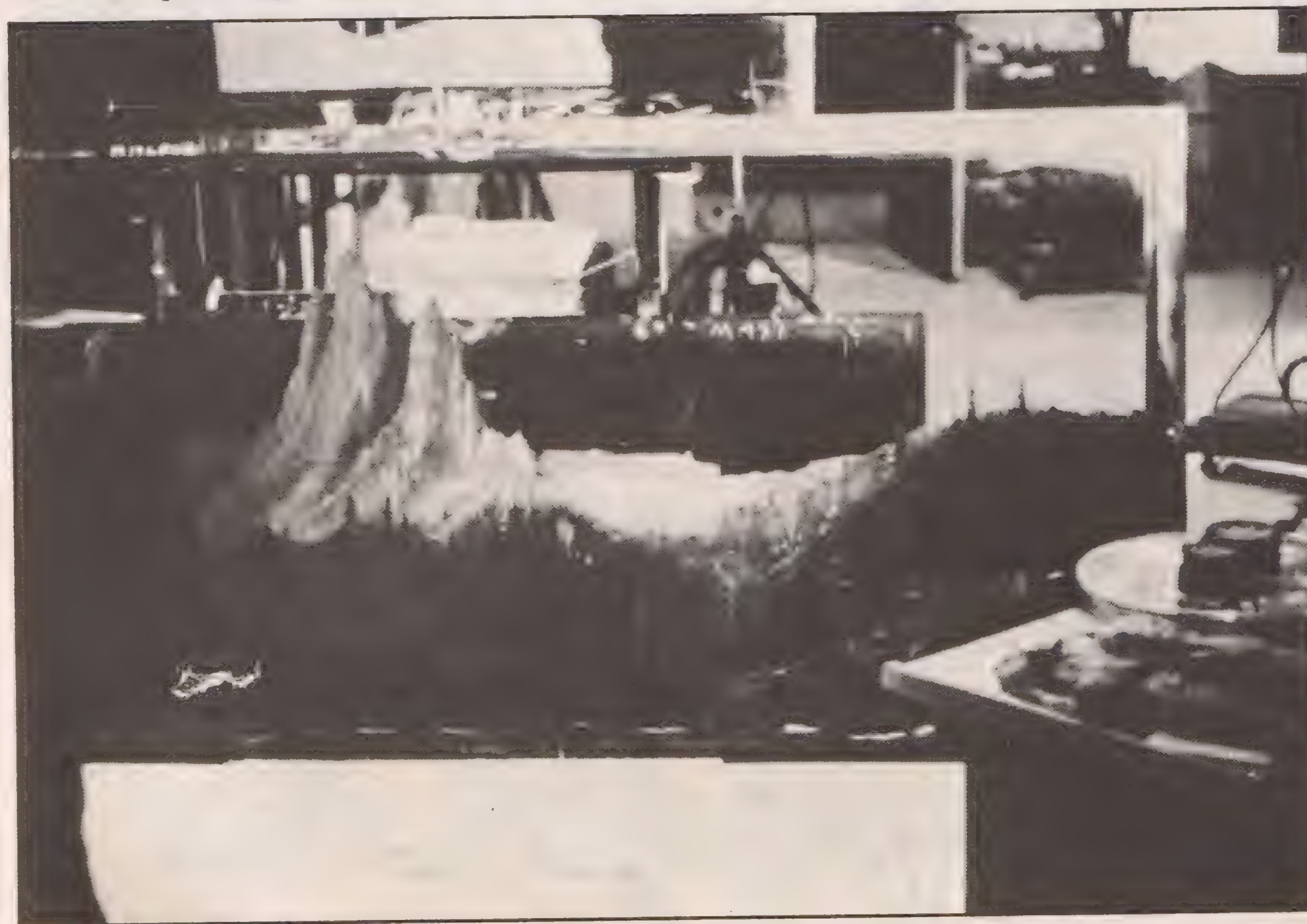
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camera; then the three shots were combined, and Ellenshaw painted in transitions between the groups. And in the Rebel's headquarters, in the shot that shows numerous X-Wing and Y-Wing fighters with their crews and pilots—that shot was also made up of numerous exposures of the same mock-up—the only X-Wing they had. Ellenshaw's task was to combine the pictures believably and paint out whatever overlapped or didn't belong there.

There are other instances of matte work in *Star Wars* (see if you can detect them next time you see the film), but the purpose of the above list is to indicate the extent to which vastness, spectacle, beauty, and design are dependent upon matte art in films—and the extent to which the eye of the beholder is led to accept the impossible as real. How is the combining of live action and painted portions accomplished? Ellenshaw tells how it's done at Disney; the basic principles are the same everywhere, but the Disney techniques are more versatile, and getting more so all the time.

First, the "plate" is prepared; this is a black and white piece of film showing the scene as it actually was shot on the sound stage, or wherever. At Disney, the plate is rear-projected onto the back of a large framed piece of glass on which the painting will be done. "We're the only studio that does that. Rear projection has advantages and disadvantages. One of the big advantages is that you can change the size of the plate, you can move it up to the left-hand corner or wherever you want it, and, of course, you can see it and actually paint right on it." If there is a fear that during the scene an actor had walked into the to-be-painted area, the whole moving scene can be rear projected, to check the integrity of the plate—right on the glass where the painting will be done.



*Return From Witch Mountain* opens with a sequence moving through the trees surrounding the lower slopes of Witch Mt., shot on the famous Disney multi-plane camera.



Photo: David Houston

"The rear projection material is just a piece of acetate which has been sand-blasted on both sides to make it translucent. We stick it right to the glass; static electricity makes it stick just fine.

"Then you paint. In the case of the scene of Ben Kenobi turning off the tractor beam, the plate was positioned a little higher than center so we could show lots of depth at the bottom. Then I painted extensions of the lines of perspective of those lights in the wall; I dimmed the base of the tractor beam thing—they never had a name for it—and continued the lines of perspective on down . . . and down."

The paint typically used is acrylic—a fast-drying flexible paint with hues that are bright and pure due to the clear plastic medium (oils tend to be yellowish; temperas tend to be powderish).

Above: Ellenshaw was able to combine two live action plates simultaneously in two different areas of the matte painting. The two areas are separated by just a thin line of painted wall to effect a blend.

"Of course the place where the plate is rear-projected is left blank, clear glass. When we photograph it, we remove the rear-projection material, substitute a piece of black velvet, and photograph it from the front. In this case (there are other methods too) we rear-projected the plate and combined it with the matte *in the camera*." This prevented an accumulation of grain due to adding a "generation" of film copying.

"You don't photograph in color. You separate the elements into blue, red and green masters. That way you can vary the light on each of the separate elements to make sure your matte painting matches the production footage in color. Of course you can't change the plate too much; it has to look real, but just to change it a touch helps you to match. There's always a critical element to match. In this case, it was the color of the lights on the walls."

Another advantage to the Disney rear-projection system is the ability to use more than one plate for a given matte painting or composite shot. In combining the many shots of freighters in the Rebel base hangar, "I could have used as many plates as I wanted. I used one plate twice; I could have used three or more."

Strictly "in-house" work done at Disney—where the original production footage is shot in preparation for film—has other advantages, one of which is still the envy of the industry: the use of sodium mattes, rather than the more common blue-screen techniques.

A major disadvantage in using any

Photo: David Houston





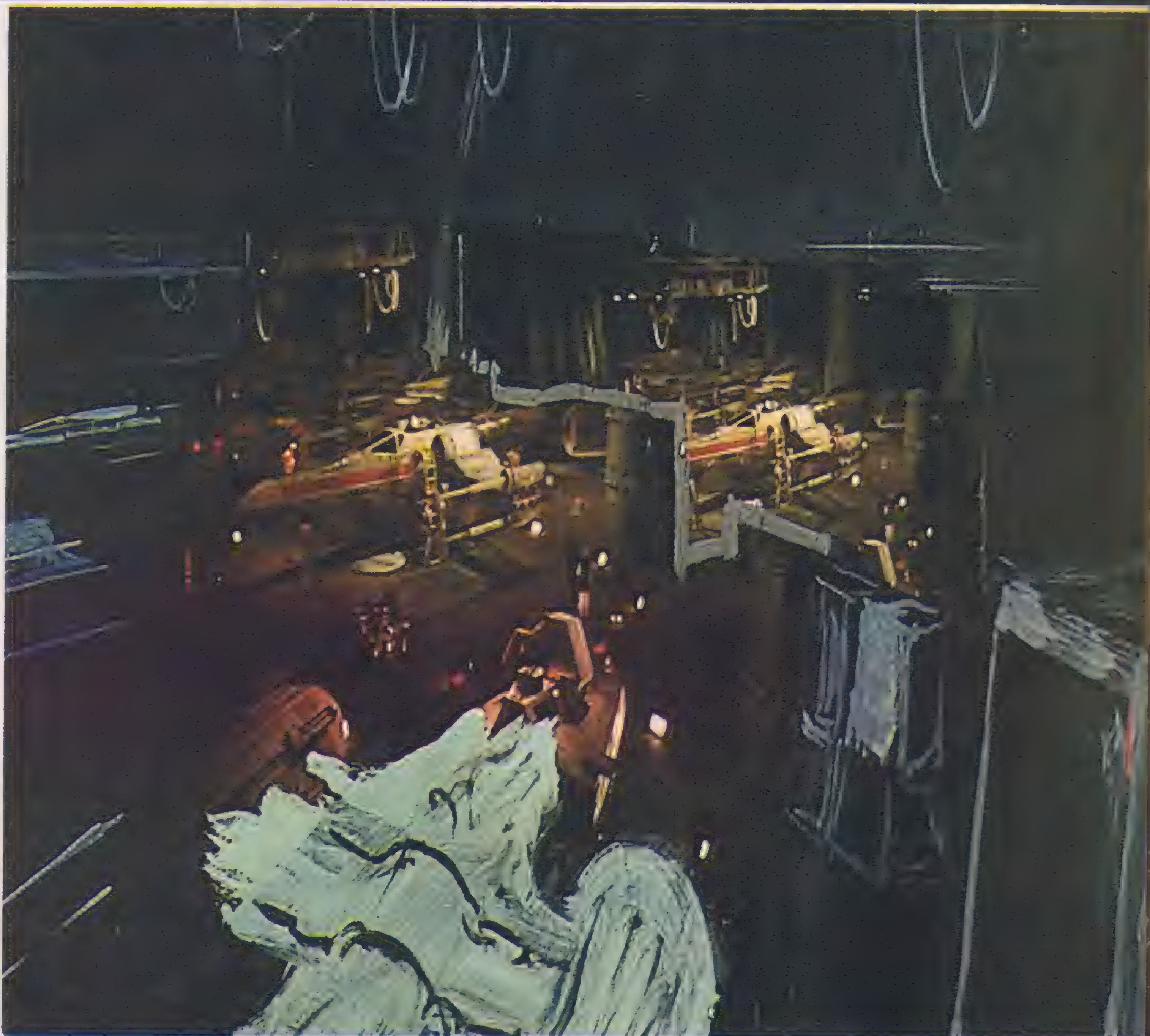
Above: The Rebel base hangar built in London was made to appear much larger by combining two plates of the same set within one matte painting. Right: An early test showing the combined plates with the painting in progress.

kind of photographic or optical special effect is that the final production is a picture of a picture of a picture, and resolution quality is lost. This makes the SFX shot stand out in the film because it is of poorer quality than the unprocessed scenes. The most common method of preparing for an effects shot is blue-screen—in which a matte, or black masking, is created on a separate piece of film. This matte is then combined optically with the other pieces of film to insure that the superimposed image is opaque and there is no resultant double image. The scene is shot against blue, and the blue is turned to black—becoming the matte.

Disney has a sodium-matte camera. Instead of blue, a sodium yellow is used as a background. In the camera, a specially made prism divides the incoming light and sends all but the narrow band of sodium yellow to a strip of color film—while the sodium band is shunted off to a separate piece of black and white film that is filtered to register as black; *that* becomes the matte. Thus the plate and matte are made simultaneously, in the camera, requiring no additional optical work and preserving the quality in the ultimate combination of real and inserted images.

Why don't others use sodium process?

"Everyone else would love to have it,



Photos: 1977 20th Century-Fox

but nobody can make the damn prism. In fact, Disney tried to have another prism made, and it was not as successful. Other people have tried, but not even the man who made the first prism has been able to do it again successfully."

Disney Studios also uses two "three-headed printers."

"We might be the only ones; but I suppose there could be others in use by now." With a one-headed printer, each picture element added means quality loss; with a two-headed printer, two





elements can be added in a single generation of film; with a three-headed printer, "you can add *tons* of information on the same piece of film. That's how we got away with so much special effects work in *Mary Poppins*." That film utilized special mechanical effects, special optical effects, matte paintings, and mixtures of live-action with animated figures. Much of that was added in a single exposure with the three-headed printer.

Disney Studios will shortly add yet another device to their matte department: a computerized "moving matte" camera.

"It's not unlike the computerized things built recently for model photography in *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters*. It's under development now in our machine shop, and when it's put to use, I guarantee it's gonna make matte work in films much tougher to detect than it is now. The camera will be able to pan on the matte, move in and out, do anything you like—while keeping the plate fixed perfectly in place relative to

Top: McQuarrie's pre-production sketch of the Mos Eisley Spaceport vista. Above: The original plate over which Ellenshaw painted the aerial view of Mos Eisley seen from afar by Luke and Ben Kenobi. Right: Ellenshaw's finished composite.

the 'hole' in the matte. A computer will instruct the camera in movements that will be recorded on film frame-by-frame."

With such extraordinary SFX capabilities, it's a shame that Disney Studios so seldom puts them to work in science-fiction films. But the studio is on the verge of remedying all that.

"The upcoming space film that we're doing here will be my first chance to work with my father—and I'm very excited about that. He is production designer of the project. He's been working on it for the past 18 months. It's called *Space Probe*—at least that's its current working title—and we're planning a tremendous number of effects. It takes place in space; there are black holes, novas exploding—all sorts of things happening. We'll have many





of the same problems that had to be solved for *Star Wars*.

"We're taking a slightly different approach in that we're not going to do the majority of the scenes with sodium or blue-screen, but we hope to be able to shoot a lot of it live—so that what you shoot is what you get. The big advantage there is that you don't lose *any* quality by going to further generations, and you see what you've got the next day.

"We hope to start on the miniatures and effects first—which is a big advantage. You make the miniatures and effects as good as they possibly can be, and then match the production footage to it, rather than vice-versa. My father has done a lot of effects on a lot of films, and generally, that's the way he likes to work."

Ellenshaw, the elder, came to Disney, and America, from England—where he

had already made a name for himself in the film industry. Walt Disney brought him over to do the matte work on *20,000 Leagues Under The Sea*.

"At the time, they were having a great deal of difficulty making the miniatures look real. Walt, I'm told, had a habit of walking the halls, dropping in on people working on a project, giving advice, saying 'That's just great,' and so on. He walked by my father's office one day and saw his sketches, thought they were terrific, and asked him to go down to the miniatures department to see if he 'could help the guys out.'

"It took some tact and diplomacy, but he was able to contribute . . . I guess I'm prejudiced, but I think the effects looked pretty good. All of those effects were done live—because at that time blue-screen or sodium process was not that well refined. One matte he did I

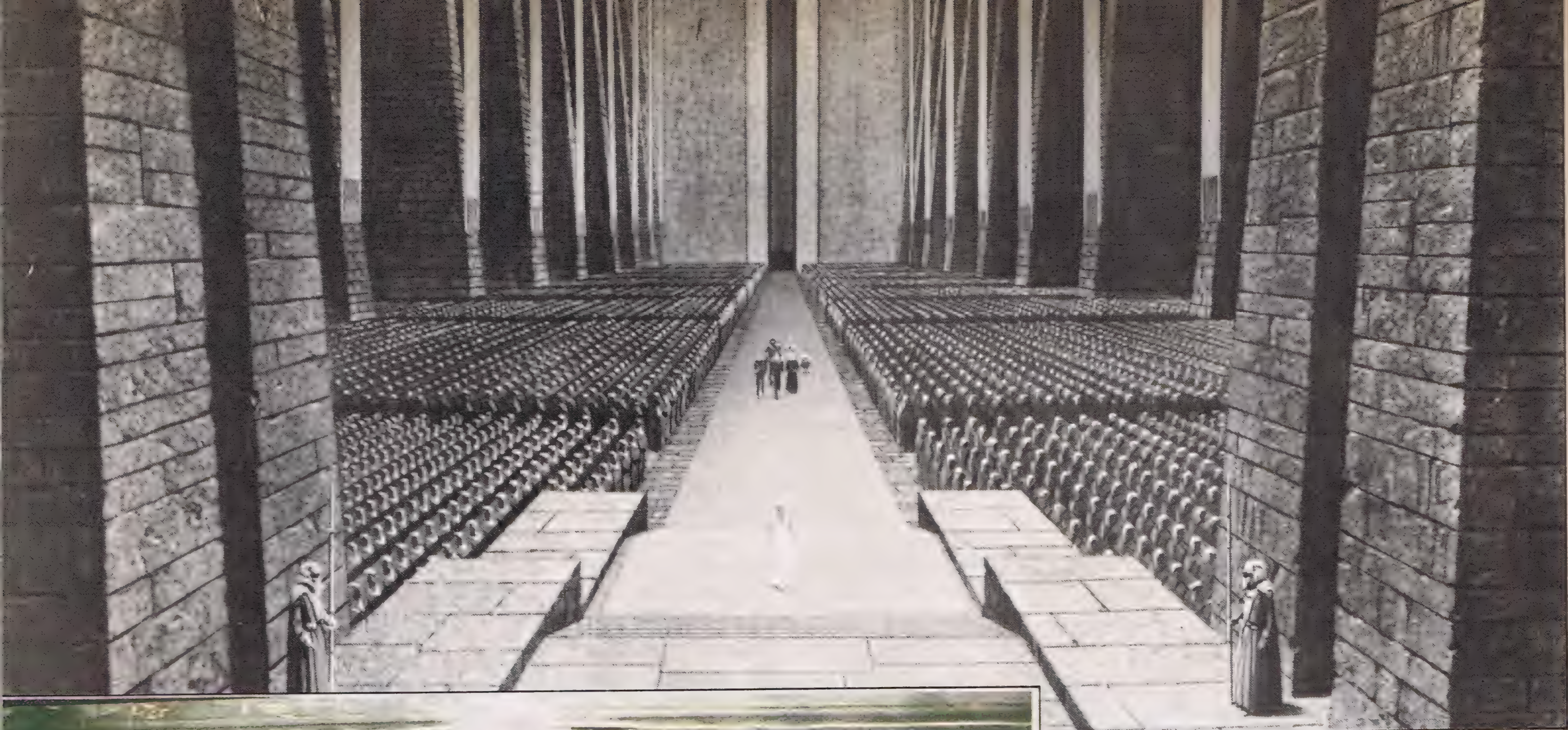
remember very well, because it was quite large, was looking down into the crater, right at the end of the movie, the crater that James Mason eventually blew up. *All* that crater around the Nautilus was a matte painting. A lot of the matte painting for that movie was shot live—what we call 'glass shots' with the painting right there on the set and the camera shooting through it. I remember that one very well, because I went out with him to film it. I was seven or eight then. *Little* did I know."

It seems an obvious connection to make, but in closing the interview, we wonder how P.S. Ellenshaw got into the matte painting business.

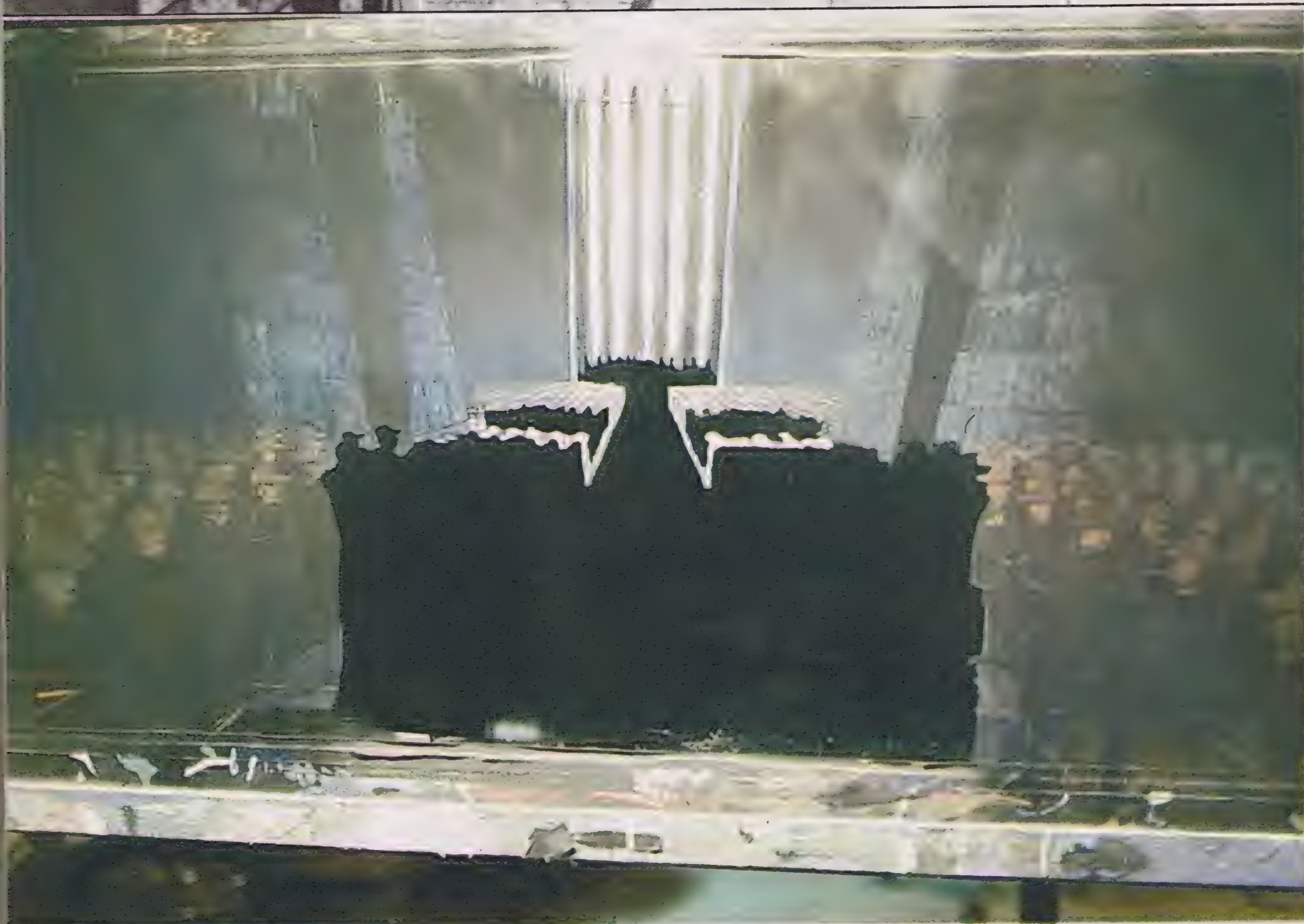
"It's not as obvious as you might imagine. I went to school, majored in psychology, got my degree, went into the Navy, got out of the Navy, and looked for a job. Jobs were tough to find; I searched around for six months







Above: No movie sound stage in the world was large enough to build the set for the final ceremony at the rebel headquarters. Left: The triple-head printer was used to combine a number of live-action plates with a painting to create the vastness required.



Photos: © 1977 20th Century-Fox

with not too much satisfaction. My father, who had done matte paintings and worked in the industry for almost 35 years, had never said anything to me, never indicated at any time, during my youth or my life in the Navy or after I got out of the Navy, that he wanted me to become a matte artist.

"Really, I had avoided it—because my father had been so successful, and it's tough to come up to that. So the heck with it, I was going to do my own thing and make a success for myself in another area."

He had been painting on the sly, secretly developing artistic skills to be put to use one day. He was a little surprised, during a time of unemployment, when his father mentioned that there was an opening at Disney, in the matte department.

Alan Maley was head of the matte department then (he recently did the matte work for *The Spy Who Loved Me*).

"My father said, 'You know, Alan is looking for an apprentice, and he hasn't been able to find somebody who's satisfactory.' I said, 'Well, okay, I'll give it a try.' I reluctantly came to see Alan and said, 'Alan, I have no experience.' He said, 'Well, I'm desperate. Why don't we give it a try for six months.'"

"Alan turned out to be an excellent teacher, as well as being a lot of fun to be around, and after six months I loved it. Coincidentally, unbeknownst to me at the beginning, Alan was anxious to leave. He wanted to work on his own as an artist. This is something that never happens to very many people—to go in just as the boss is wanting to leave.

Usually, a boss will want you to fail a little so he can keep you down there. But he was very anxious for me to succeed. After four years, he left, and I took over the matte department. A lot of people said, 'Gee, isn't he a little young'—I was 27—but the studio had no one else and didn't have a heck of a lot of choice in the matter. They said, 'We'll give it a year and see what happens.' Luckily, things worked out."

Luckily for all of us. P.S. Ellenshaw continues a great family tradition. Not only does he follow his father; his step-grandfather was Percy Day—a pioneer in the use of mattes and supervisor for the matte paintings in *Things To Come*, a film that would have been less than the masterpiece it is without the use of mattes. When that film was made, matte artists were hidden in closets, seldom given any screen credit at all. Hopefully, those dark ages are gone for good, and matte artists—whose best work we never realize we are seeing—can be acknowledged for their invaluable contribution to imaginative film-making. ★

*Next issue, the SFX series delves into the specialized world of sound effects from the early days of radio to today's challenges at the frontiers of the SF cinema.*



## Communications

(continued from page 57)

of some of the most expensive of the hour long series—\$360,000 for *Logan's Run*, \$375,000 for *Wonder Woman* and *Man From Atlantis* and a whopping \$410,000 per episode of *Six Million Dollar Man*—our producer might be forgiven for breaking down and weeping in hopeless frustration! For, while the networks continue to regard animation as suitable only for kiddie fare, he will never get the opportunity or the budget to show what animation is capable of in terms of *adult* entertainment. Is it any wonder that animators often have a complex about being second-class film makers?

Cam Ford, Animation Director  
Cinemagic Animated Films  
4 Camira St.  
Pymble, N.S.W. 2073  
Australia

### WARNING

... In STARLOG there was an ad for quality Star Trek props, phasers, communicators, etc. by Starfleet Command, Inc. I ordered a communicator for 034.95. This was in early September; here it is February, and I have still not received it. I have written to them many times, and not once did I get a reply.

John Bock  
705 Hillside  
Sherman, TX 75090

*We find ourselves in a sad position when past advertisers, with whom we have done good reliable business cannot also deal reliably with our readers—their customers. Unfortunately, this is the case with Starfleet Command. For over a year, we have received continuous complaints regarding the slow service and lack of communication. We have contacted James T. Kirk (the owner) repeatedly by letter, telephone and in person, and he has promised each time that the company is not a rip-off but is simply backlogged. From our point of view, gross inefficiency that lasts for over a year is unacceptable, and we feel obligated to warn our readers of these facts.*

### TREK DEFENDED

... In reply to Jon Bell's letter in STARLOG No. 12, I would like to express my own opinion regarding *Star Trek's* "non-interference" directive. This Prime Directive, part of *Star Trek's* respect for diversity, forbids interference with the "normal development of a viable culture." It is based on the conviction that there are certain universally recognized truths and morals. A society that is different is not necessarily wrong! But it's important to understand that there are also certain things that can be objectively demonstrated as wrong for all intelligent beings—murder, slavery, etc. So when Captain Kirk takes action, it's not purely out of "rank imperialism," but out of a moral confidence. He acts against that which is fundamentally wrong, for peace in his profession.

Kathy O'Keefe  
1022 Willow Drive  
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15237

### SON OF TREK DREK

... Again I open your magazine and find someone putting down *Star Trek*. And like all the rest, this person knows nothing of which he is talking about, and proceeds to stick his foot in his mouth. I am referring to the letter

printed in STARLOG No. 12 entitled "*Trek Is Drek?*" I will now proceed to set things straight on the Prime Directive, General Order Number One, the rule of noninterference. How did the Prime Directive come about? Using my *Trek* library and doing some heavy research I found that in 2981 Federation intervention led to a destructive, planet-wide civil war on Altair VI. As a result, new procedures for future contact and exploration were developed—among them General Order Number One was designed to compensate for the assimilation of alien cultures into the Federation. Certainly, without the Prime Directive, the Federation's historical record in contacting and dealing with new civilizations would have been far worse. (Direct quotes from an article entitled "*The Federation—An Historical Overview*" by Geoffrey Mandel.)

*The Star Trek Concordance* by Bjo Trimble states: The rule of non-interference is a wise but often troublesome rule which prohibits Federation interference with the *normal development* of alien life and societies. It can be disregarded when absolutely vital to the interests of the entire Federation. There are many examples where Captain Kirk was able to disregard the rule of noninterference to help a faltering alien culture, and put it back on the road to a productive future.

If the Federation helps each and every alien culture with advances of technology and civilization, not only do we cheat them of developing a unique and special culture all their own but they will be forever dependent on the Federation. General Order Number One was not fashioned to cheat alien cultures who are too primitive, from experiencing the more technological advanced benefits of The Federation. The alien worlds who are on the right path to becoming a high order of intelligent beings should be left alone. It could be possible that any interference may infect the world, causing more damage than good. On the other hand, an alien world not advancing should need a push in the right direction, and I'm sure that, although no episode has shown it, the Federation has done it many times with excellent results.

Elmer Shulz  
2564 Capaldi Drive,  
Marion, Ohio 43302

*The key here is your use of the phrase, "... alien worlds who are on the right path ... should be left alone." Can the Federation really determine the right path for alien worlds? We still feel that the Prime Directive was abused and, occasionally, disregarded.*

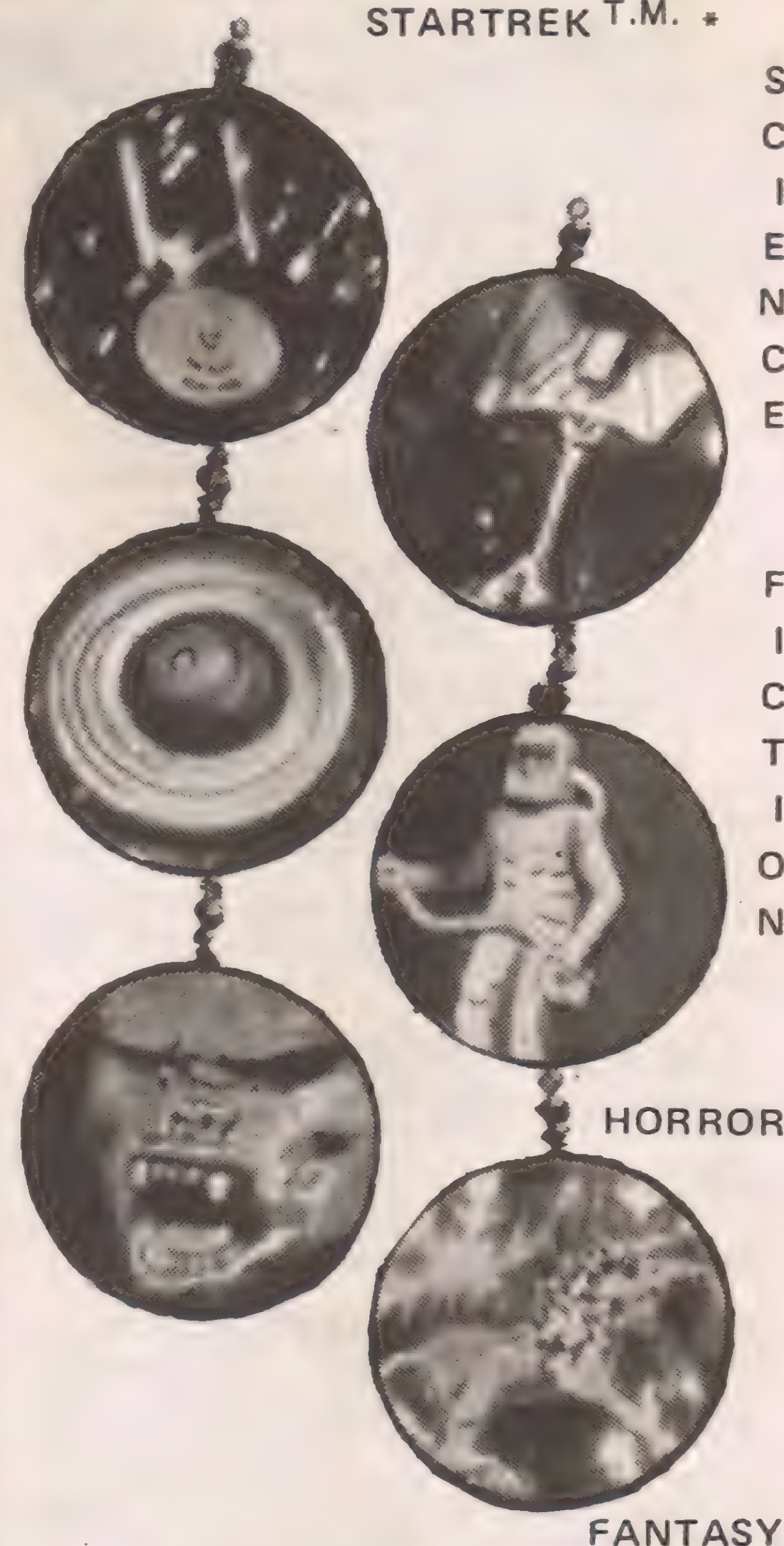
### TREKKERS SHOW CONCERN

... I want to thank you and your staff for printing my letter *Trek Bigots* in the January issue of STARLOG. I have gotten such a response from all over the country that I'm beginning to feel like a celebrity. The best letter came on Christmas Eve from California from a man who goes by the name of Gene Roddenberry. He told me that he'd read my letter in STARLOG and that he agreed with the way I felt about *Trek* fans vs. *Space: 1999* fans. He wishes the same as I do; that we should all work together toward getting good science fiction on TV and not be working towards cutting each other down. Needless to say, it was the best Christmas present I ever received.

Janice Al Carlson  
Box 1572  
Mt. Berry, Ga. 30149

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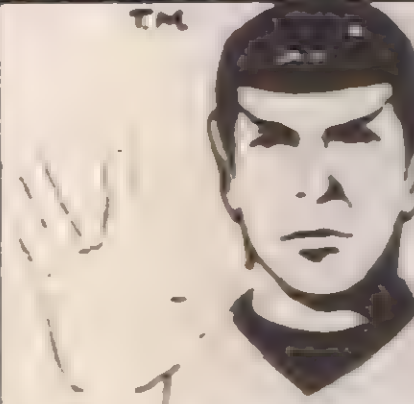


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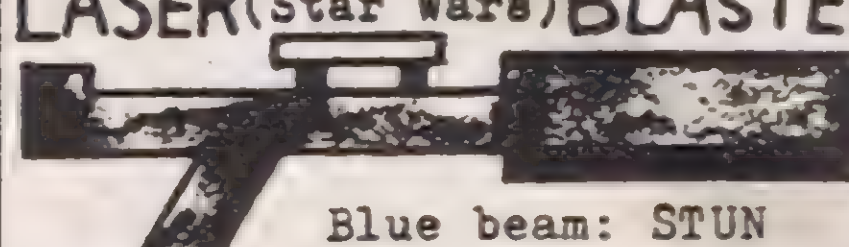
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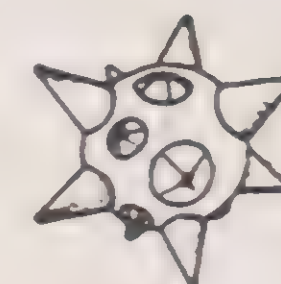
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## THE INCREDIBLE MELTING MAN

(Continued from page 27)

victims, too, so I had to create a half-eaten head of a nurse. A lot of stuff like that.”

Despite its hectic shooting schedule and decidedly unspectacular budget, *The Incredible Melting Man* was completed on time and with enough clout to entice American International Pictures into releasing it. As of now, Rick Baker, makeup man extraordinaire is THE star of the film as far as the studio publicists are concerned. From his home in California the Melting Man’s “father” does phone interviews regularly with newspapers and magazines from New York to Honolulu. *The Melting Man* is being dubbed “The First NEW Horror Creature” and Baker touted as “The New Master Of Special Effects.” And, while Baker is obviously impressed with the lavish praise being heaped upon his work, he is conscientiously avoiding the resulting wave of hype.

“I’d just like everyone to know,” he states somewhat whimsically, “that they really shouldn’t believe everything they read about *The Incredible Melting Man*. Some publicist wrote a biography of me that is totally fictitious. He has me doing makeups for motion pictures I’ve never been involved with.”

This new, in-the-spotlight aspect of Rick’s career is still a source of amusement and bewilderment to the bearded makeup ace. It also is an occasional annoyance. “Really. There’s a poster making the rounds saying things like ‘Rick Baker, the new master of special effects who brought you the magic of *The Exorcist* . . .’ I mean, I’m flattered, but I didn’t do anything *creative* on *The Exorcist*. Dick Smith did all the designing and creative work. I was an assistant who did the physical work. A friend of mine told me that the film’s director, Billy Friedkin, was in the Warner Brothers office in Paris and he just happened to spot this particular poster which was, for some reason, hanging on their wall. ‘Who gave you the magic of *The Exorcist* . . .’ Billy ripped it off the wall and tore it up. Now he probably thinks that I’m walking around taking claim for someone else’s work. I’m not. I wish that could be cleared up.”

The phone in Baker’s home rings and another interview is under way. The “new master” continues coping with the newfound demands of media stardom while his horrific offspring makes his way from theater to theater, decomposing before the eyes of thousands of science-fiction devotees. “He is a human time bomb!” states the glut of movie posters currently lounging in lobbies everywhere. “He must be stopped before he kills us all.” *The Incredible Melting Man*: the face and the appetite you’ll never forget. ★

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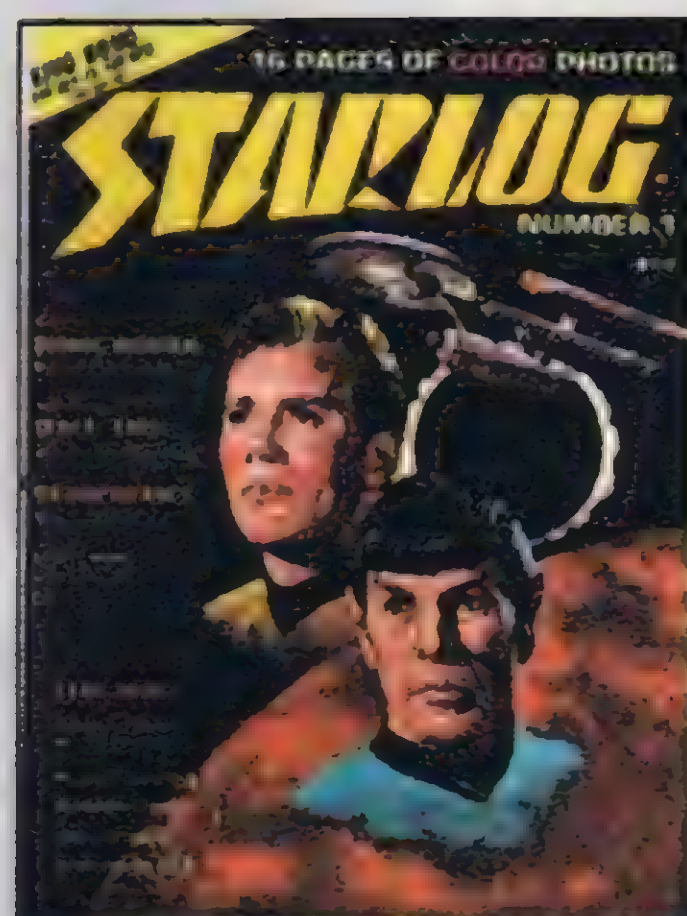
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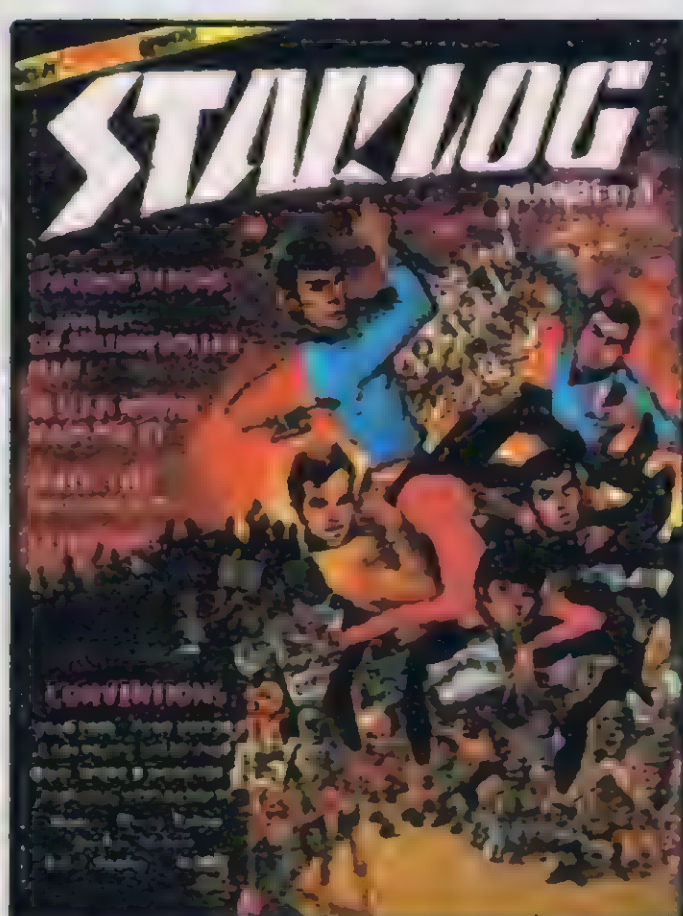
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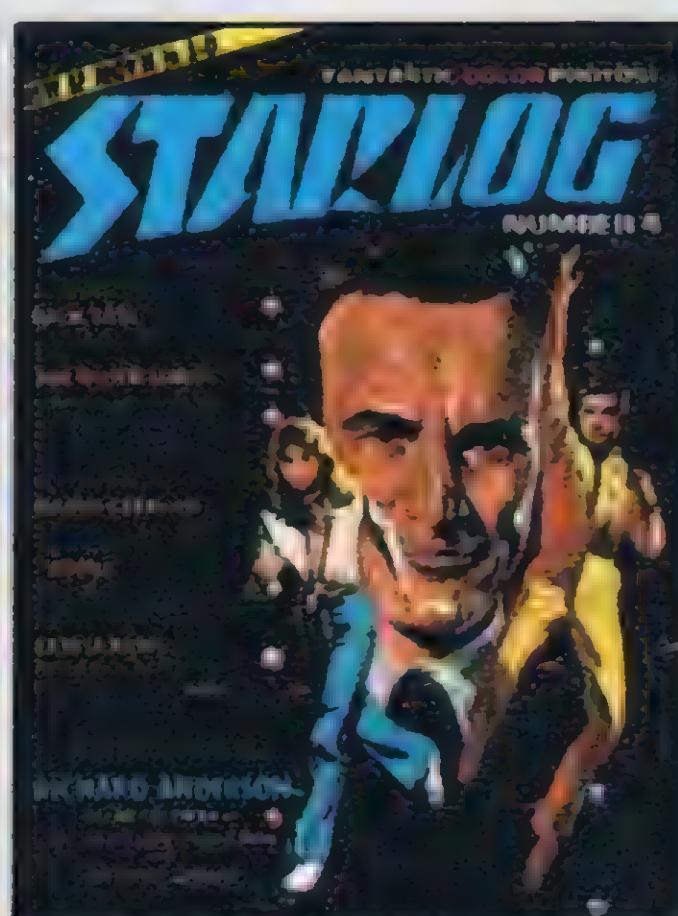
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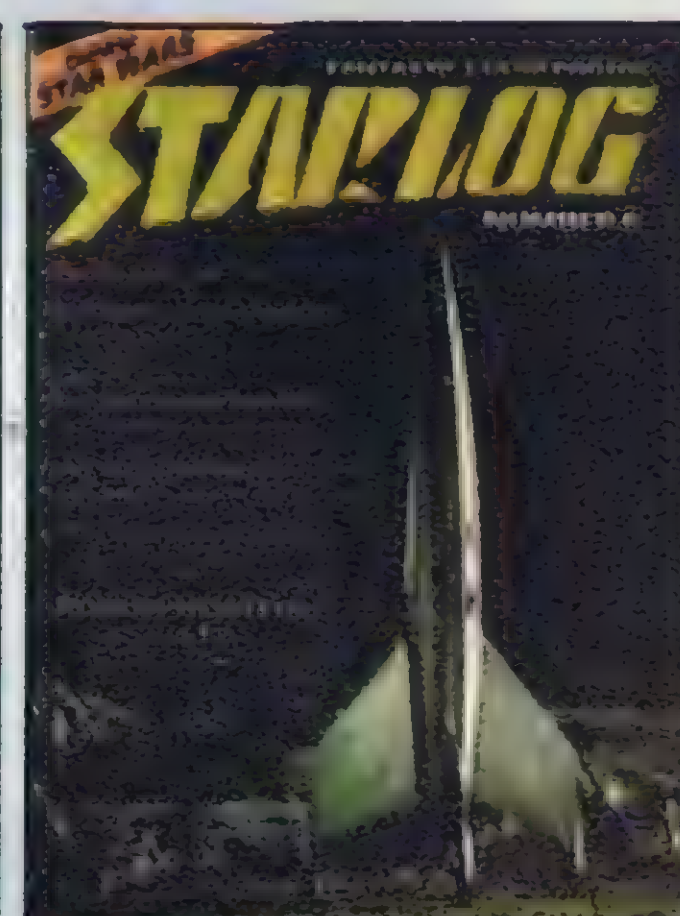
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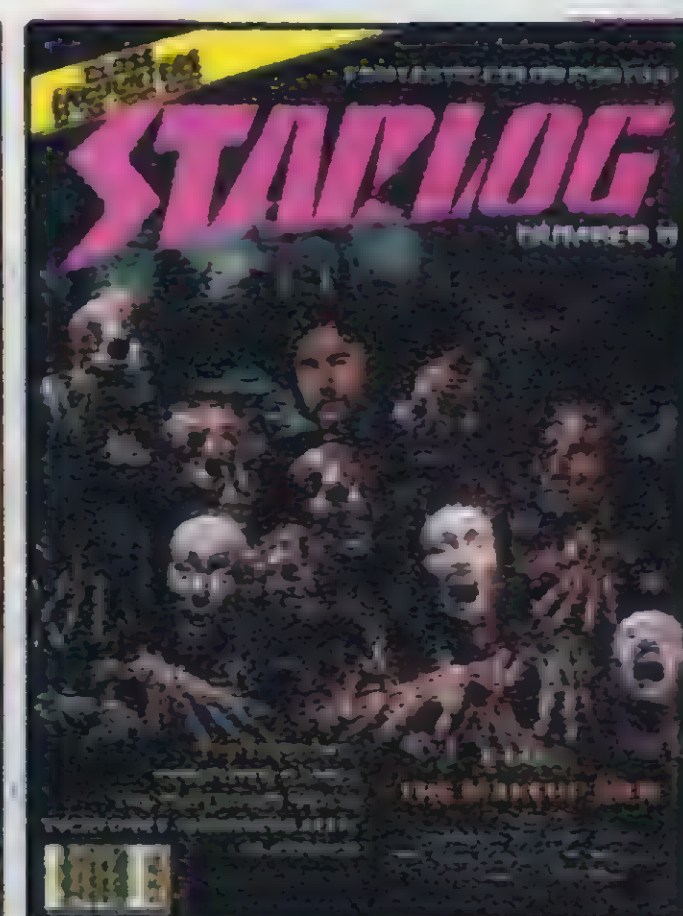
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## TWO BRANCHES OF SCIENCE FICTION'S CONCEPTUAL FAMILY TREE

### Part III: Extrapolation

(In Part I, SF concepts were divided into two branches: wishful thinking and extrapolation; invisibility, ESP and telekinesis were discussed. Part II covered teleportation, other dimensions, time travel, and extrapolation was introduced and defined.)

The literary methods and space-age predictions of Jules Verne are well known and understood.<sup>1</sup> Consider, however, the story background for one of his virtually unknown novels, *Propeller Island*. An itinerant French string quartet is touring the American West Coast; they are abducted (graciously) and awake to find themselves aboard Standard Island, which is moving out to sea. The Island is artificial and self-propelled but contains two townships, parks, a casino: the moving sidewalks, telephones, electric power, telegraph (connecting to numerous trans-Pacific cables), and the telautograph—which transmits signatures, making shopping by phone a “credit-card” affair. The island is a retreat for retired American millionaires, who are starved for art and music (hence the kidnapping). The plots involve

1. See “Visions” in STARLOG No. 7 and No. 10

Verne's 1864 *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* reflects its era.

a feud between the two “ruling” families and the Romeo-and-Juliet love of their kids, and an attempt by Malay pirates to take over the island. The most prominent theme is *city planning*.

Written in 1875 (when H.G. Wells was 9), before any of its inventions were in popular use, *Propeller Island* was extrapolated from existing machinery, ideas being expressed in the daily news, proposals by scientists, and the political trends of Verne's day. (*Propeller Island* has also been published in English under the title *A Floating City*.)

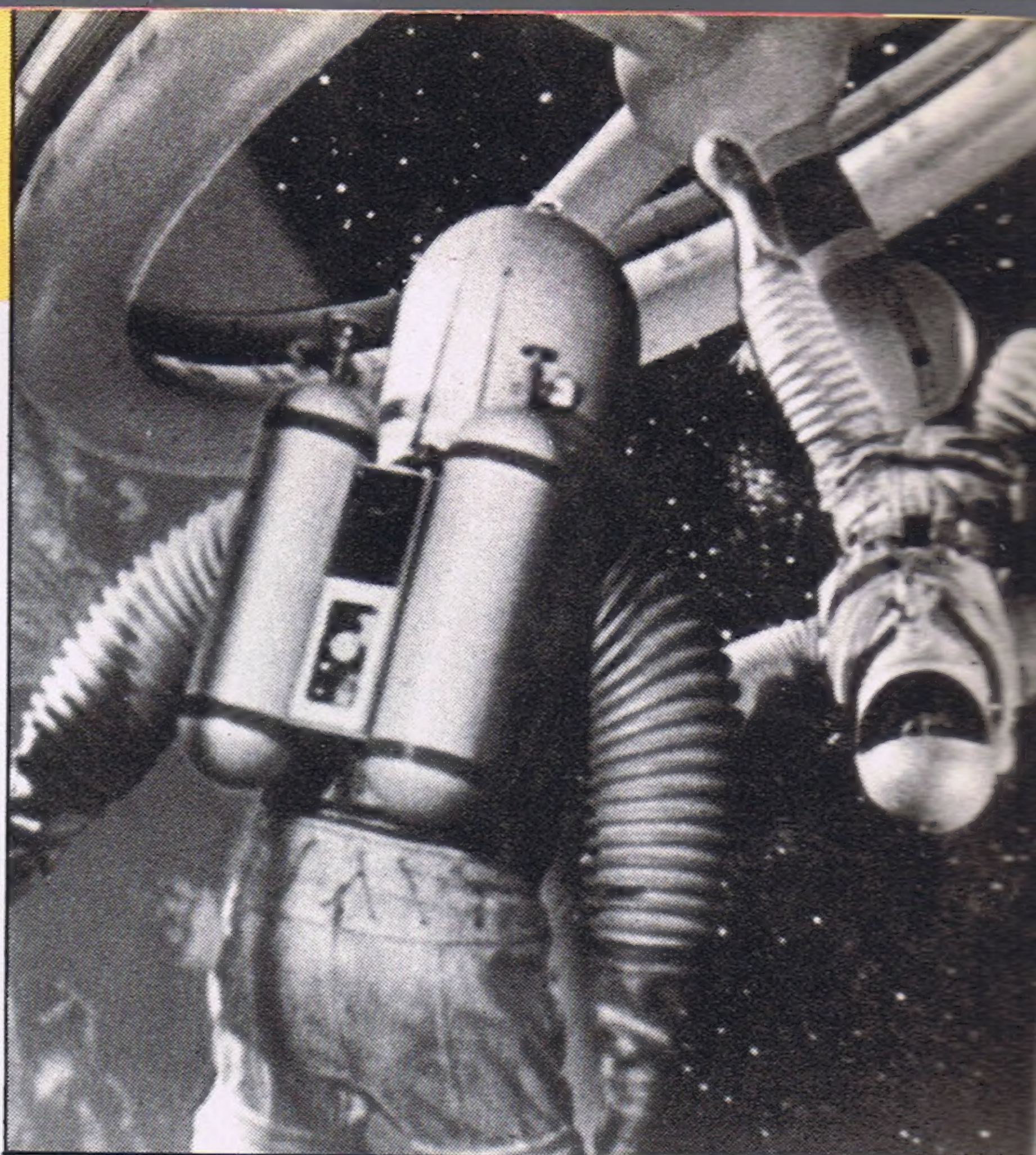
It is no coincidence that our best extrapolators today are writers who are also scientists. Arthur C. Clarke is the inventor of the communications satellite and author of numerous science books, including such texts as *The Promise Of Space* (1968). He gave us some highly detailed visions of the near future in *2001: A Space Odyssey*—passenger shuttles, a great space station under construction, the centrifugal crew quarters of the *Discovery I*, the reasoning computer, HAL. His book *Rendezvous with Rama* set forth the wondrous phenomena that would occur within the inside-out world of a miles-long cylindrical revolving spaceship, where water falls in a spiral and windstorms have hurricane force. In *Imperial Earth* he constructs a colony on Titan so vividly, and in such accord







Above: Asimov extrapolated from his knowledge of biochemistry for *Fantastic Voyage*. Above right: Pal's *Conquest of Space* is rooted in fact.



with known conditions there, that we literally sight-see when traversing its surface.

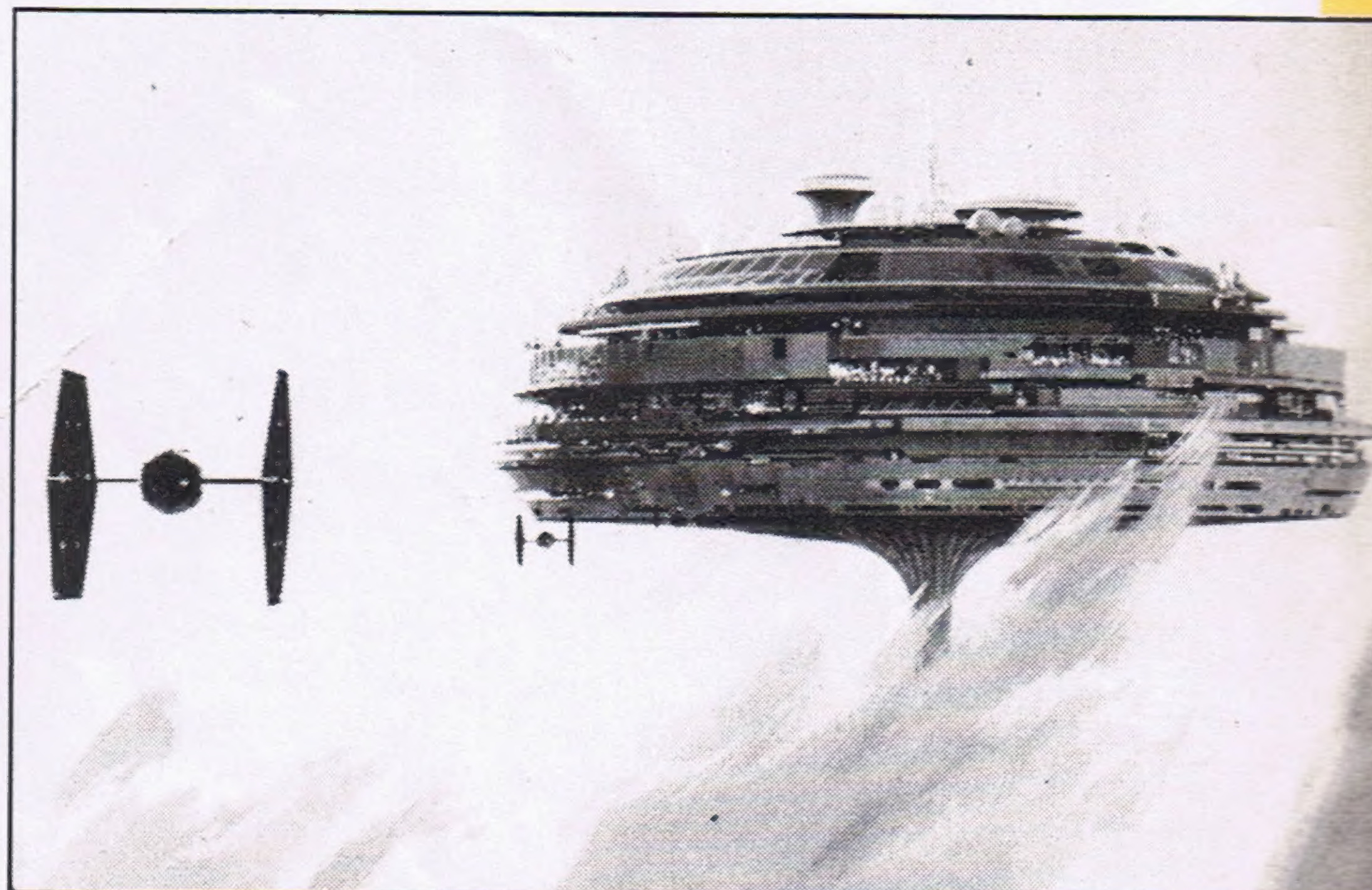
Many of Clarke's short stories are pure extrapolation and are implicitly dedicated to worshipers of science and accuracy. One, "Transit Of Earth," begins with the author's note: "All the astronomical events described in this story take place at the times stated." In it, a dying astronaut on Mars heartbreakingly observes the passage of the tiny dot of Earth across the face of the sun—on May 11, 1984, at 4:32 (Earth Greenwich time). It's doubly chilling, because it is real!

Biochemist Isaac Asimov (whose published books are surely approaching 200 in number) is the greatest exegete alive. His nonfiction includes such monumental works as *The Intelligent Man's Guide to Science*, *Science Past—Science Future*, *The Genetic Code*, and *The Universe*. It is no wonder that his fiction is remarkably credible scientifically, even when some pretty wild wishful thinking is also involved. His book *The Gods Themselves* details the imaginary biology of a complex microscopic alien race. The film *Fantastic Voyage* benefitted from his knowledge of biochemistry as our heroes are microminiaturized and sent into the bloodstream of a living man; and Asimov adapted that script to a novel form. Probably his most lasting contribution in the SF field is his development of the science of robotics; he described the construction and function of robots capable of every form of work—including deductive reasoning, which requires a bit of wishful thinking according to current science.

Robert A. Heinlein co-scripted *Destination Moon* (1950), from elements of his earlier novels; he was also a consultant during the filming of it.<sup>2</sup> It is still, today, the finest example of extrapolation applied to SF movie-making. Centered around the most accurate up-to-the-minute plans of the very scientists who ultimately *did* place our men on the moon, the film showed rocketry, instrumentation, communications, and astronomy all taken just one step beyond the known. Heinlein also gave us the novel *The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress* which told of tyranny and rebellion in a colony on the moon. This film incorporated the latest data on the lunar surface with projections of living conditions on a world man has yet to inhabit.

The result of extrapolation can be found somewhere in any science fiction story worthy of the genre. Its effects are conspicuous in such diverse works as Martin Caidin's book *Cyborg* and the bionic TV versions of it; Michael

2. See Heinlein's article on the making of *Destination Moon* in STARLOG No. 6.



Above: A community for tomorrow? Extrapolation looks to the future.

Crichton's *Andromeda Strain*, in which the disease was wishfully fabricated, but the laboratory procedures were extrapolated from the most up-to-date; all those films dating from Doyle's *The Lost World*, in which the most contemporary discoveries of the archaeologists are brought to life; Pal's *The Conquest Of Space*, a trip to Mars based on research done by Werner von Braun and other scientists; and even such low-budget movies as *Riders To The Stars* (1954), about attempts to capture meteors from orbit before they would be incinerated in the earth's atmosphere.

Wishful thinking and extrapolation pervade the history of science fiction: most great works are a combination of both methods. But take all the extrapolation out of a story, so that only wishful thinking is left, and you no longer have science fiction at all—you have fantasy. Take away both creative methods and you might be left with something that can be called science-adventure—movies like *Earthquake*, *Marooned*, and *Jaws*.

With all its power to disseminate knowledge, perhaps to affect the course of history, science-fiction's greatest function is to entertain—to enmesh its reader, its listener, its viewer, in an imaginary world of thought-provoking excitement. To many, the world of their choice is one of escapist wishful thinking; to as many others, it is a more earth-bound world extrapolated from our own. Many enjoy the two in combination.

But for all who love science fiction, ours is a realm of visions.



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# LASTWORD

In STARLOG No. 10, we presented a fascinating science-fact article by Isaac Asimov on the possibilities of *faster-than-light* travel. Dr. Asimov was decidedly pessimistic about the realization of the Starship *Enterprise's* warp drive propulsion system. And yet he did hold out hope for a dim "maybe." This was not a matter of a judicious man hedging his bet. Asimov is aware of the fact that many of the major scientific breakthroughs of this century would have been difficult (if not impossible) to predict. The law of serendipity has been responsible for some of the more important developments.

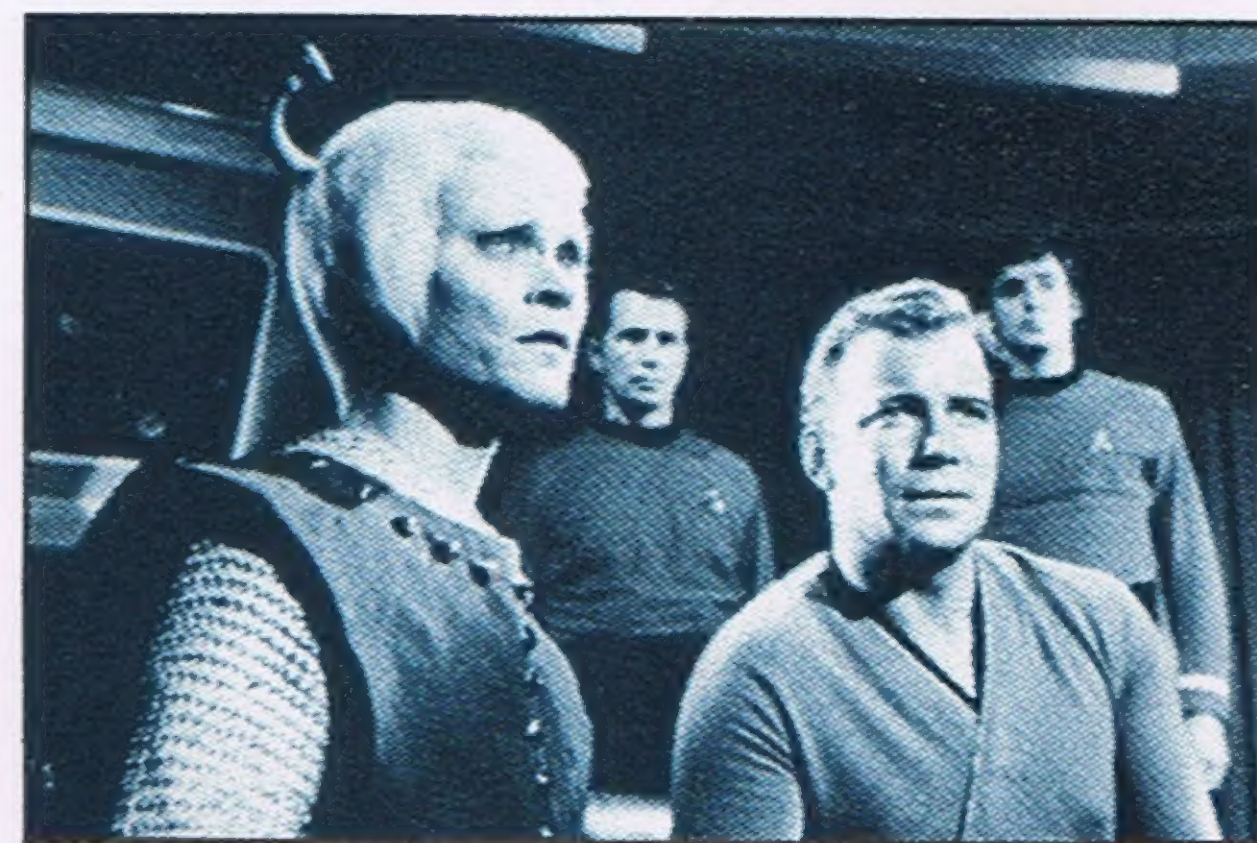
"Serendipity" is the art or faculty for finding something important or of value while looking for something else. The modern science of radio astronomy developed in just this way. In the early 1960s when the technicians at Bell Laboratories were experimenting with new methods to improve long-distance communications, they kept picking up strange background static on their receiving equipment. They checked out all of their equipment for flaws, even going so far as to chase all the pigeons away from their large, dish antenna.

Of course, the "background static" turned out to be the "music of the spheres," so to speak. The Bell scientists had accidentally discovered the radio emissions of solar bodies. Today radio astronomers are engaged in categorizing and investigating the causes of such astral phenomena as pulsars, quasars and the mysterious black holes.

By an odd coincidence, black holes may well hold the key to *faster-than-light* or even *interdimensional* travel—as Dr. Asimov pointed out in his article.

The research and development that is happening in the physical sciences today

is mind-boggling. Many of these projects would have been viewed as pure science fiction just a few years ago. For example: one of the most intensive areas of worldwide scientific research is in the mechanics of gravity. In an effort to measure gravitational waves (the only form of radiation that has yet to be demonstrably observed) two methods of *cancelling* gravity are being developed. One successful experiment involved floating a five-ton cylinder of superconducting alloy in an electromagnetic bubble.



Another approach consists of splitting a laser beam and reflecting part of it back and forth several hundred times between mirrors. The result of the entire process is to give the laser waves "mass," which would theoretically form a cushion against gravity for anything resting on top of it.

A mere fifty years after the premiere of the *Buck Rogers* comic strip, we have accomplished many of the technological feats that were predicted for the twenty-fifth century. With all of the research now going on it is impossible to predict what breakthroughs will occur and at what pace. But one thing is certain: new developments and technologies *will* occur and more and more of SF's 'less likely' scenarios will become part of our daily reality.

Howard Zimmerman/Editor

## NEXT ISSUE:

STARLOG No. 15 will sneak-preview a chapter from David Gerrold's new SF novel *Death Beast*—we think it may be one of this year's giant books. Also—an up to the minute report on the new *Superman* film, a look at the new *Star Trek* comic, and a highly unusual article on SF authors—how they manage to get such an uncanny fix on the future, and the methods they use to do it. In addition, our regular Special Effects feature will take a look (and listen) into the world of sound effects. And there will be clusters of fantastic color photos, science news, and—as always—one or two very special surprises.

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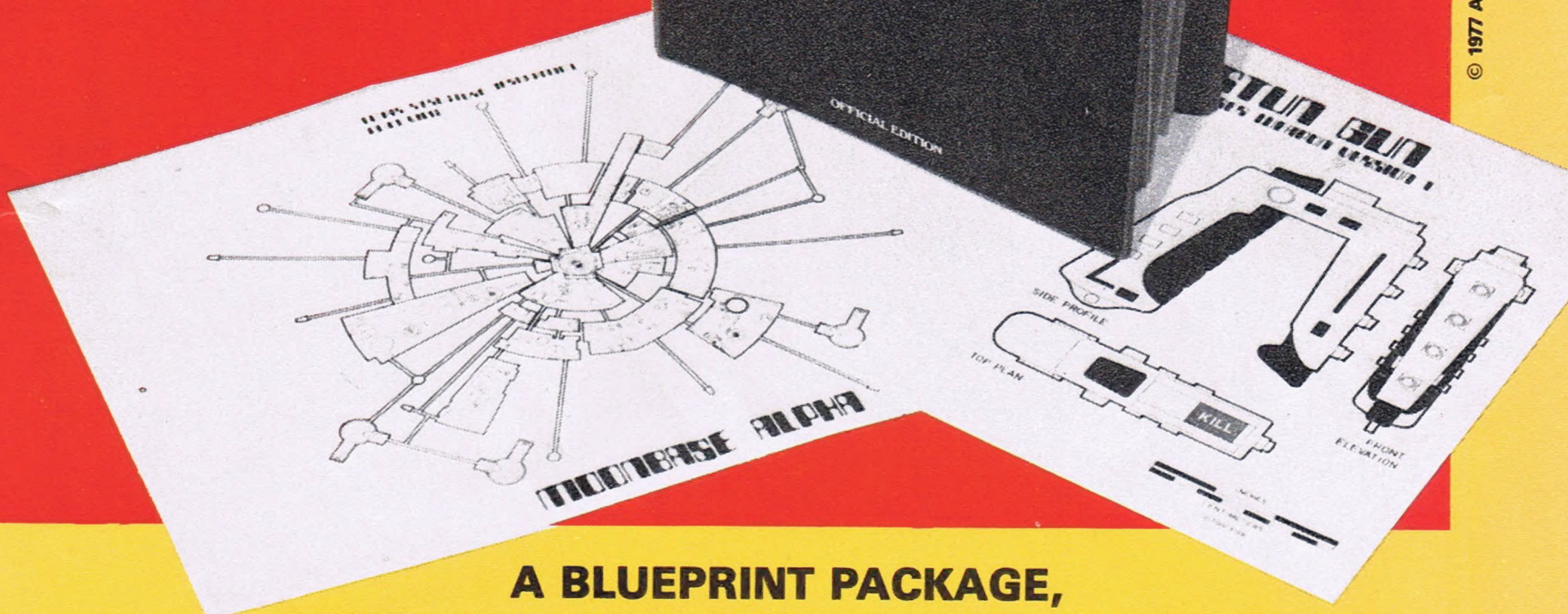
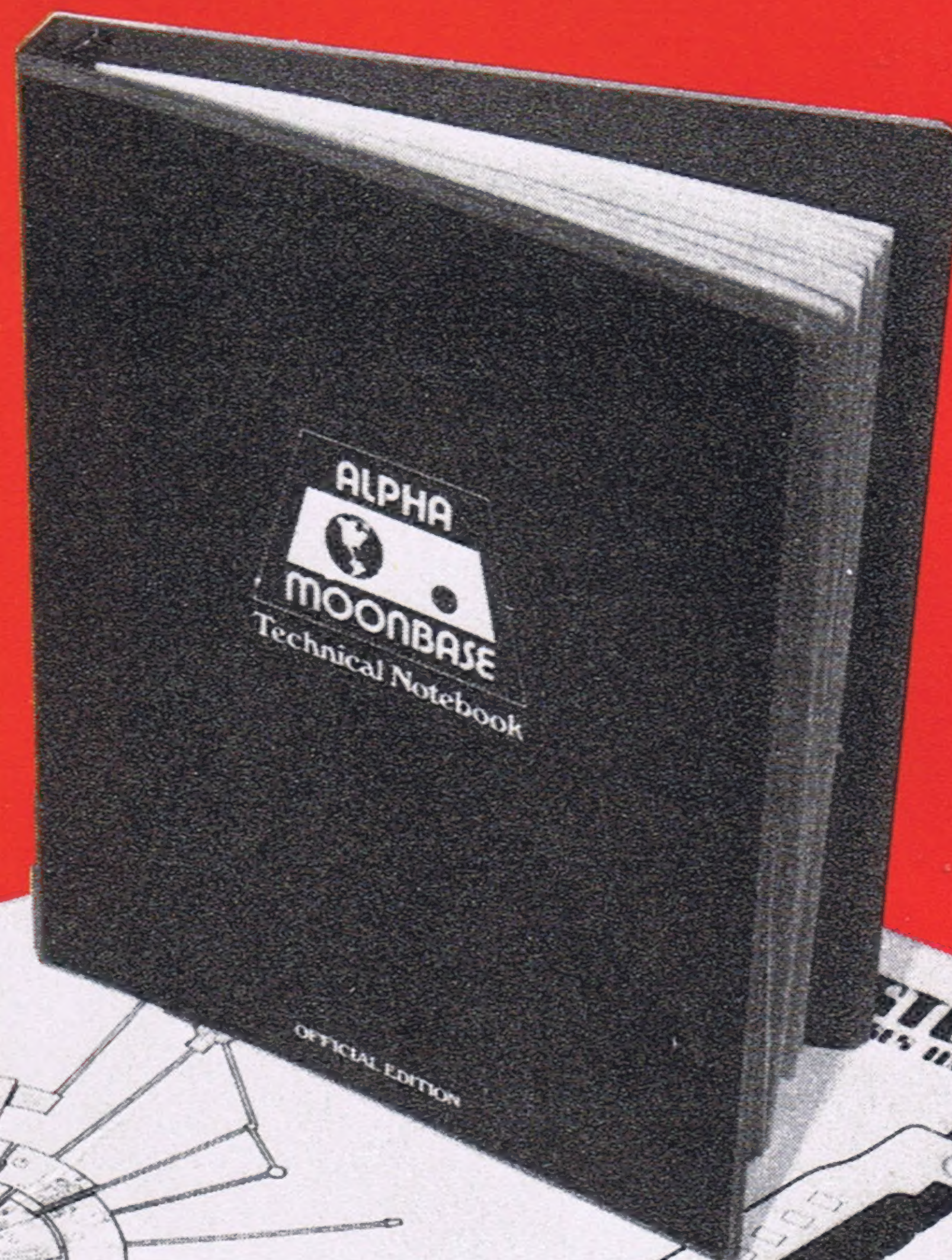
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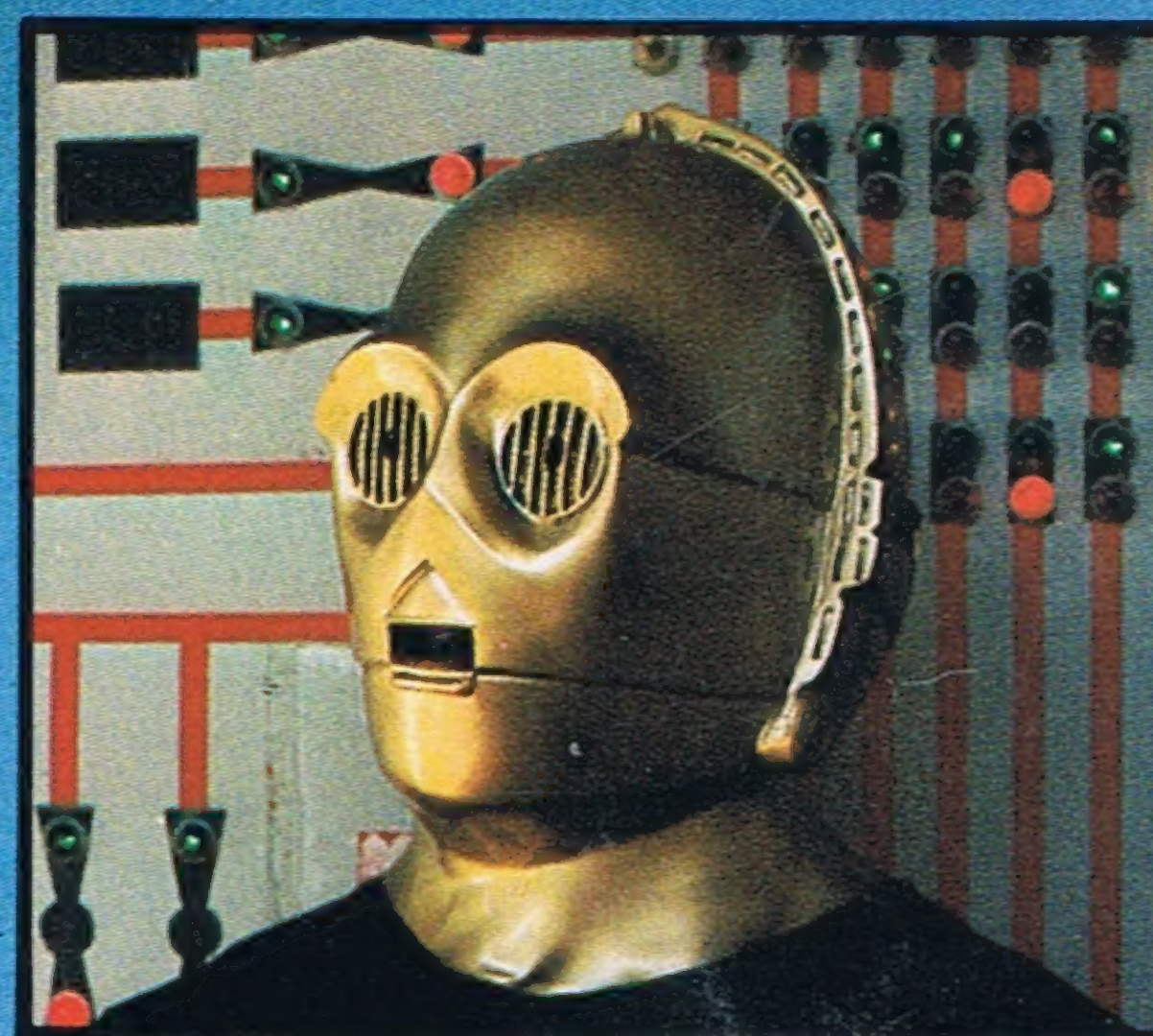
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